

London plays down OCME idea

LONDON (AFP) — The Foreign Office strove Tuesday to calm waves of criticism that met British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind's proposition to create a council of security and cooperation for the Middle East. London had "no intention to detract from the basic importance of the peace process," in launching the idea to set up a new institution along the lines of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe in the region, John Shepherd, head of the Foreign Office Middle East Department said. Mr. Rifkind proposed setting up a Middle East body to resolve regional conflicts on Nov. 4 during a visit to Abu Dhabi. He said there would be clear benefits in establishing "what we might call an Organisation for Cooperation in the Middle East (OCME)." He said such a body could provide a framework for dialogue, but would not detract from the work of other regional bodies, such as the Gulf Cooperation Council or the Arab League.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة جليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الرأي»

Haensch cancels Orient House visit

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The president of the European parliament, Klaus Haensch, cancelled a planned visit Tuesday to Orient House, the unofficial Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) headquarters in Arab East Jerusalem. Palestinian officials said Mr. Haensch, on a four-day tour of Israel and the Palestinian territories, had been due to meet Tuesday evening at the Orient House with Faisal Hussein, the top Palestinian official in Jerusalem. But following meetings with Israeli officials who are firmly opposed to any diplomatic visits to the Orient House, Mr. Haensch suggested sending a lower-ranking member of his delegation and then cancelled the encounter altogether at the last minute, a PLO spokesman said. Mr. Haensch was not immediately available for comment.



His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday opens the last regular session of the 12th Parliament with the traditional speech from the Throne (photo by Yousef Allani)

King opens final regular session of 12th Parliament

*Jordan will press ahead with its democratic march; economic course will improve people's lives
Kingdom will continue to support Palestinian struggle; Israel should respect all agreements*

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday opened the fourth and last ordinary session of the 12th Parliament with the traditional speech from the Throne stressing the Kingdom's commitment to democracy but warned against those who violate the law and the Constitution in the name of democracy.

The King also said the economic reform process will continue through the introduction of new legislation that will stem economic growth and attract private sector investment.

In a 16-page speech that addressed domestic and foreign policies, King Hussein reiterated commitment to peace as a strategic choice and urged Israel to implement all the agreements it has signed with the Palestinian National Authority.

King Hussein emphasised that Jordan will continue to seek positive relations with all Arab states on the basis of mutual respect and non-interference in the internal affairs of each other.

"We will continue in our democratic process and in creating the environment necessary to make this process prosper further so that the benefits are felt by all," the King told lawmakers.

"At the same time," he said, "we will monitor the practices of those who do not yet comprehend democracy for what it is: the acceptance by the minority of the decisions of the majority, the respect of the majority for the opinions of the minority and their right to express them; that it is a means towards stability and one of the pillars of the Constitution, not a means to bypass

it or empty it of its substance."

The King criticised political parties which, he said, have organisational and financial links with outside forces but said they will not hinder the process of democratisation.

"The attempt by some who are misguided and blinded enough to adopt examples from those who are way behind us in achievement and development is truly pitiful. These are futile efforts in search of abstract roles or cheap external funding," the King told members of the Lower and Upper Houses of Parliament.

"We shall not be hindered by those who wallow in self pity and insist on belittling the status of their country," the King said.

Stressing that the government will continue to implement the policy statement upon which it won the confidence of the House, King Hussein criticised politicians who attack the government for achieving personal political goals and pledged to review the relationship between the executive and legislative branches of government.

"The separation between the three branches of the state is embodied in our Constitution away from personal whims and petty biases," said the King. "We are in the process of reviewing gradually and objectively the relationship between all three branches, particularly between the executive and legislative with an eye to developing and consolidating the relationship so that each branch is able to fully perform its national role and responsibility."

But the King did not say whether he will end the practice of including members of the House in the government. The current government includes 21 deputies along with Prime Minister Abdul Karim

Kabariti.

And in what was seen as a new vote of confidence in the government, the King said: "My sense of hope is renewed when I see my government working in earnest and in faith and transparency to restructure different sectors in order to achieve further justice, development and modernity."

"My government will continue to follow the letter of its policy statement until all the goals envisaged by us are achieved," said the King.

The King sent an optimistic message about the effectiveness of the economic reform policy in improving living standards and attaining

See page 7 for full text of the King's speech

tangible economic growth.

He said the new draft laws on companies, securities, customs, protection of national products and the management and investment of state funds will complement the economic reform package which was endorsed by the House last year. He said these laws will allow for a larger private sector involvement in the economy and will lead to stable economic growth as the government continues to pay special attention to needy groups in society.

"Jordan, which managed to make serious headway and progress in times of war and conflict... is still quite capable of achieving much more in this era of peace which will — God willing — uplift the entire region once the remaining issues on the Palestinian, Syrian and Lebanese tracks are resolved," said the King.

Reiterating the Kingdom's declared position on the peace

process, the King stressed that the only way out of the current stalemate is "to implement all the agreements between the Palestinian National Authority and Israel."

The King said Jordan will continue to support the Palestinians in their quest for realising their right to statehood on their national soil.

Highlighting the efforts of Jordan and the Hashemites in preserving the holy sites in Jerusalem and protecting the Arab and Muslim character of the city, the King said: "Our responsibilities towards the holy sites are held in trust, to be handed over by us to the Palestinian state once final status negotiations are concluded and once the Palestinian state, with Jerusalem as its capital, is established."

The King stressed that efforts for the attainment of comprehensive peace will continue because the "alternative to peace is death and destruction."

The Lower House convenes after a summer of political tension that reached its height in August when the government raised bread prices, leading to riots in the southern city of Karak. Despite the efforts the government has taken to ease the tension, especially after King Hussein's amnesty of certain groups of convicts and instruction to end legal procedures against those suspected of having been involved in the Karak riots, opposition deputies say the causes of tension between the two sides remain.

"I believe that the causes of tension are still there. I believe that the government has to go," Islamic Action Front (IAF) Deputy Bassam Emoush told the Jordan Times after the opening of the session.

Opposition deputies, who had

Sroure reelected speaker with 46 votes against 29 for Keilani

By Tareq Momani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Incumbent Lower House of Parliament Speaker Sa'd Hayel Sroure was Tuesday reelected for a third term after securing 46 votes against 29 won by his sole rival Ibrahim Keilani from the Islamic Action Front (IAF) party in the first Parliament meeting after its formal opening by His Majesty King Hussein.

A total of 78 deputies attended the initial meeting of the Lower House, the fourth and last by the 12th Parliament before next year's elections.

Two ballots were found blank and one said "no one" while two House members, Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh and Samir Habashneh were absent as they are on visits abroad.

Two of the parliamentary blocs which supported Mr. Sroure were elected as first and second deputy speakers. They were Abdul Baqi Jammo, who won 50 votes against 27 for his rival Talal Obeidat and Anwar Hadid, who received 46 votes against 31 votes won by his rival Khalil Haddadin.

The results of the voting were seen by observers as a blow to the opposition, which comprises 22 deputies who had nominated



Sa'd Hayel Sroure

Dr. Keilani, Mr. Obeidat and Mr. Haddadin.

The House also elected Salem Zawaideh and Samih Al Farah to serve as assistants to the speaker. Deputy Abdul Majid Al Aqash from the opposition received 31 votes in his bid to become assistant to the speaker.

A government source expressed satisfaction over the results saying "this is a manifestation of true democracy and we are happy at the results," said the source.

"Mr. Sroure's management of the House's meetings in the earlier sessions has proved successful and some of the most sensitive issues were discussed during his

mandate in a successful manner that prompted most of the deputies to reelect him for another term," said the source.

"Mr. Sroure delivered a short address voicing appreciation of the deputies' support and confidence. He said the renewed confidence in him motivated him to double his efforts to serve Parliament and shoulder his national responsibility."

The House elected the following deputies to prepare a draft of the reply to the speech from the Throne: Taha Hababbeh, Bassam Emoush, Taher Al Masri, Ibrahim Keilani, Abdullah Ensour, Abdul Karim Dughmi, Fawzi Tneineh, Abdul Hadi Majali, Mohammad Al Haj, Mohammad Daoudieh, Hani Masalha and Mansour Ben Tarif.

Mr. Sroure adjourned the session saying that the House will in the next meeting elect members of the House's 14 committees but no date has been fixed for the next meeting.

Also on Tuesday the Upper House of Parliament (Senate) held a session under the chairmanship of its Speaker Ahmad Lawzi and elected three members — Taher Hikmat, Nassereddin Al Assad and Jawdat Shoul — to prepare the Senate's reply to the speech from the Throne.

Israelis evacuating Hebron HQ despite talks deadlock

HEBRON (Agencies) — The Israeli army began removing furniture from headquarters in Hebron overnight even though negotiations with the Palestinians on the extension of self-rule to the city remained deadlocked, officials said Tuesday.

The Israeli army also arrested 12 suspected Palestinian militants in a crackdown in Hebron ahead of the expected handover of most of the explosive city to Palestinian self-rule, Palestinian sources said.

The sources said nine students were picked up during the night in a dormitory of the Hebron Polytechnic Institute. Another student from the institute and two other men were arrested in the city earlier in the day, they said.

Hebron is known as a stronghold of the militant Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas), but there was no immediate confirmation that the 12 arrested men were members of the group.

Israeli security officials have said they feared Hamas or other opponents of peace agreements with Israel would try to disrupt an eventual Israeli troop withdrawal from the Hebron.

An army spokesman said meanwhile soldiers emptied offices in the military government building in Hebron as part of preparations for its redeployment from most Arab sectors of the city.

But at the same time the army has significantly boosted its presence in the city earlier in the day, 15 per cent of the city

where 420 zealous Jewish settlers live and will remain under Israeli guard after the handover, he said.

The army preparations for its withdrawal continued despite the lack of progress in negotiations with the Palestinian self-rule authority over the exact terms of the transfer of power in Hebron, the last West Bank city under full occupation.

Both sides said talks were continuing, but Israeli officials said they had regressed in recent days with the Palestinians backing down on some earlier positions.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat accused the Israelis on Monday of seeking fundamental changes to the Oslo accords signed by the previous Labour

(Continued on page 12)

New status with U.S. will boost Jordan's Armed Forces — King

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday sent a message to Chairman of the Joint Chiefs-of-Staff Field Marshal Abdul Hafez Mirai and the directors of the Public Security, General Intelligence and Civil Defence departments informing them of the recent U.S. decision to grant Jordan the status of a non-North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) ally.

King Hussein said the decision will facilitate the acquisition by Jordan of the latest U.S. military technology and equipment.

King Hussein said the designation by U.S. President Bill Clinton of Jordan and its army as a major non-NATO ally is a gesture of appreciation for Jordan's

unique status at the regional and international levels. The King noted that "the good reputation of the Jordanian Armed Forces, their sacrifices and the professional manner in which they have performed their peace-keeping duties in different parts of the world have contributed significantly to this achievement."

Under the new situation, the Jordanian Armed Forces will have priority consideration for receiving U.S. arms and military equipment and for acquiring the modern technology that Jordan has been denied in the past, the King said in his message.

The King said the new position places Jordan on equal footing with such

(Continued on page 12)

U.S. vetoes Ghali reelection, wants Africa to nominate new candidate

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United States Tuesday vetoed Boutros Ghali for reelection as secretary general by a 14-1 vote in the 15-member Security Council.

But U.N. spokesman Sylvana Foa said the 74-year-old Egyptian diplomat would remain a candidate, setting the stage for a protracted battle in which the United States has so far found itself diplomatically isolated.

U.N. rules allow candidates' names to be resubmitted in subsequent voting rounds regardless of whether they receive a veto from one of the permanent council members: the United States, Britain, France, China and Russia.

"This is just the opening round," Ms. Foa said. "He's in it until the Security Council makes a final decision" on a new secre-

tary general.

"He is gratified and really appreciates the overwhelming support shown by the member states of the United Nations," she said.

Commenting on the U.S. veto, she added: "This is obviously not a democratic process."

While the U.S. veto does not technically force Mr. Ghali to withdraw his candidacy, it unofficially signals to candidates in the wings that they may step forward.

Aspirants to the prestigious post had refrained from waging open campaigns until the United States, which provides 25 per cent of the U.N. budget, took formal steps to oppose Mr. Ghali.

The outcome of the vote pitting the United States against big powers Britain, China, France, Russia and 10 other countries con-

firmed that Washington stood alone in its crusade to dislodge the U.N. chief.

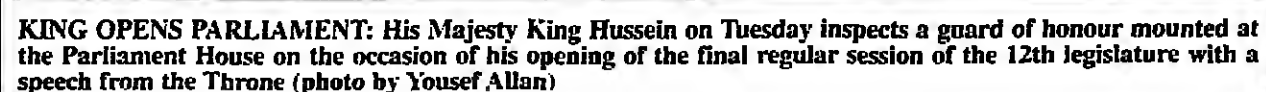
African diplomats asserted that their governments supported Mr. Ghali for the post and had no intention of submitting new candidates.

"We are very pleased with the vote," said Egyptian Ambassador Nabil Al Araby, who presented Mr. Ghali's candidacy at the U.N. Security Council along with his counterparts from Botswana and Guinea-Bissau.

"It proves that the whole world was behind Africa and behind the candidate that Africa chose, which is the current secretary general," Mr. Araby said.

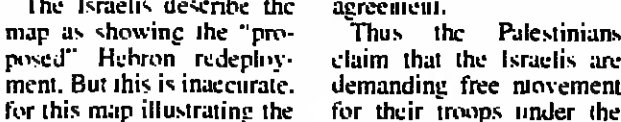
U.S. Ambassador Madeleine Albright said the veto set off the race for Ghali's succession and invited African countries to submit names.

"Such atrocities have created an atmosphere of terror, where people fear not just being killed, but being killed in particularly brutal ways," Mr. Sané said.



KING OPENS PARLIAMENT: His Majesty King Hussein on Tuesday inspects a guard of honour mounted at the Parliament House on the occasion of his opening of the final regular session of the 12th legislature with a speech from the Throne (photo by Yousef Allan)

This astonishing Israeli claim on the whole of what the local people call "Hebron" has not been pub-



The scene in the busy fruit and vegetable market in the town illustrates the cultural divide between the two peoples. Modern four-story apartment blocks, such as Beit Hadassa and Beit Romano, which are inhabited by Israeli settlers, stand in the middle of the market cheek-by-jowl with low century-old stone-built shops and houses. Religious Jews in prayer shawls, and Muslims in traditional dress, drift round the mosque which has been a Muslim place of worship for hundreds of years. That shrine is now under Jewish-Israeli control and is expected to remain so for the foreseeable future. A couple of Israeli soldiers — who are omnipresent — a soldier and his soldier girlfriend stand around hand-in-hand, an action which amounts to a scandalous demonstration in this strict and traditional Islamic holy city, sacred alike to Jew and Muslim.

Sultan Qabous also said his country plans to diversify the Sultanate's oil-based economy, decrease reliance on foreign workers and encourage the private sec-

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Iraqi opposition groups have written to President Nelson Mandela criticising a south African fact-finding mission to the Iraq this week, the SAPA news agency reported here Tuesday. The London-based Iraqi National Congress (INC), an umbrella group of opposition parties, said it "notes with concern" reports that South Africa is considering establishing diplomatic ties with Baghdad. In a letter dated November 18, the INC urged Mr. Mandela to use his "special voice in international affairs" to speak out against continuing human rights abuses in Iraq and help end President Saddam Hussein's "reign of terror." The foreign ministry in Pretoria, however, told AFP Tuesday that the South African delegation had visited Iraq as part of a broader Middle East tour to gather information for future "foreign policy formulation."

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13:30 Tunis (TU)
13:55 Vienna (OS)
15:30 Algiers (AH)
20:10 Beirut (ME)
21:00 Paris, Dantecus (AF)
21:40 Tel Aviv (LY)
22:20 Larnaca (CY)
22:30 Athens, Beirut (OK)
22:30 Istanbul (TA)
23:15 Amsterdam (KL)
01:55 London (BA)
Royal Wings (RW) Flights	
09:20 Aqaba (RW)
18:55 Tel Aviv (RW)
DEPARTURES	
09:45 Rome (RI)
10:40 Berlin, London (RJ)
11:10 Istanbul (RJ)
2:00 Casablanca (RJ)
9:30 Colombo (RJ)
9:35 Beirut (RJ)
20:00 Bombay (RJ)
20:00 Kuala Lumpur (ADJ/RJ)
20:05 Riyadh, Dhahran (RJ)
20:10 Cairo (RJ)
21:30 New Delhi (RJ)
21:50 Calcutta, Bangkok (RJ)
1:15 Dhruat, Muscat (RJ)
2:45 Samaa (RJ)
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Home News

Labour union and workers at odds over planned strike

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Federation of Jordanian Labour Unions (FJLU) issued a statement Tuesday urging the Jordan Electric Power Company (JEPCO) workers to refrain from a scheduled strike.

The labour federation described the strike as "illegal" and bound to cause serious damage to the workers' movement in general and the company workers in particular.

The workers maintain that their negotiations with the company's management for a raise in wages as well as better working conditions have ended in deadlock.

The federation statement said that the union, which represents the JEPCO workers, has been striving to secure benefits for the workers and has been in contact with company management to achieve that goal.

"While admitting that the dispute has intensified of late, the federation appeals to all JEPCO workers to call off the strike, respect regulations and enter into negotiations with management through an appointed mediator in conformity with the Jordanian Labour Law," the statement read.

"Federation regulations empower the federation board to take legal measures against such illegal action but

does not wish to resort to such measures unless deemed necessary in order to safeguard the national interest."

The statement followed a five-hour meeting held Monday under the chairmanship of Minister of Labour Abdul Hafez Shakhanbeh and attended by Union President Khalifeh Ma'aita and Federation Secretary General Khaled Shreim.

Subsequent to the meeting, the minister announced that the workers' strike scheduled for Wednesday was unlawful and that the Ministry of Labour holds the workers unilaterally responsible should the strike be enforced.

The minister urged workers to abide by the law, affirming that the labour dispute has been referred to a mediator to defuse the situation and terminate the dispute.

Mr. Shreim confirmed that he sent a message to Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabarini advising him that negotiations over the dispute are at an impasse and that the strike seemed inevitable.

"We tried to convene a meeting for the two parties," he said, "but company management refused and demanded that the meeting be held in the presence of a government-appointed mediator."

"In the meantime," he stated, "both the management and the workers are adhering tenaciously to their positions."

Mr. Shreim described the federation and the Ministry of Labour as continuing their contacts with the two parties to potentially contain the dispute and avert a strike.

But, he noted, Article 135 of the Labour Law stipulates that the federation has the right to suspend any strike until arbitration negotiations have been completed.

Mr. Shreim urged workers and company management to be "responsible" and avoid the strike in order to safeguard the public interest.

However, President of the Workers Union Khalifeh Ma'aita remonstrated that negotiations have generated no positive results and that workers are resolved to proceed with their scheduled strike on Wednesday.

"We are determined to persevere with the purpose of securing our rights," said Mr. Ma'aita who described the strike as legal and in accordance with Article 135 of the Labour Law.

Former ambassador accused of embezzlement, freed on bail

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Former Jordanian Ambassador to Switzerland Akram Barakat, who is standing trial on charges of embezzlement and/or misappropriation of state funds, was Tuesday freed on bail of JD 50,000, legal sources said.

Mr. Barakat was detained in Jan. 1995 and refused bail until Monday when Amman Criminal Court Judge Isam Abu Gheneim approved a request filed by Defence Attorney Ayman Abu Sharakh.

The sources confirmed that bail was posted and all legal formalities completed on Tuesday and Mr. Barakat, who had been detained at Swaga prison, was released shortly thereafter.

The former diplomat was not immediately available for comment.

This type of case is one of

the rarest reported in Jordan involving a diplomat of ambassadorial rank.

The court started hearing the case on Sept. 20, months after Mr. Barakat was recalled from his post in Bern, Switzerland, following a joint Foreign Ministry/Audit Bureau inspection of the embassy's accounts. He was detained immediately upon his return home.

The Foreign Ministry/Audit Bureau inspection revealed major discrepancies. Funds of the embassy were missing or unaccounted for, and the mission also suffered direct losses as a result of the alleged actions, according to the prosecution.

The total amount, including the allegedly embezzled/misappropriated amount, as well as direct losses, is estimated at JD 343,116.

The amount includes, according to the charge

sheet, rent for the embassy premises, a loan taken by Mr. Barakat from the bank where the mission maintained its account and seized from the accounts of the mission by the same bank (when he failed to repay the amount) and proceeds from an unapproved sale of an embassy vehicle. Also included in the amount are damages claimed by those to whom the embassy was indebted and interest on payments that the ambassador failed to make.

According to the charge sheet, the discrepancies surfaced when the owner of the embassy premises in Bern wrote directly to the Foreign Ministry in Amman seeking payment of rent in late 1994.

The Foreign Ministry, which had already transferred the amount to Bern, launched an investigation along with the Audit Bureau and sent representatives to Switzerland to

inspect the books of the embassy's accounts.

The results of the investigation and testimonies from embassy staff led to the case against Mr. Barakat, who served as head of the Jordan Information Bureau in Washington for 12 years before being assigned as ambassador to Switzerland in 1990.

Foreign Ministry and Audit Bureau officials are the main prosecution witnesses in the case. On Monday, the court heard the testimony of an Audit Bureau official.

It was not immediately known what line of defence the former diplomat intends to present in court.

If convicted Mr. Barakat could be sentenced up to 15 years in prison and a stiff fine equal to the amount that he is accused of having embezzled and/or misappropriated.

Environmentalists, decision-makers attempt to come to an accord on dam construction

IN BRIEF

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13:50 ... Beirut

14:30 ... PKI

15:50 ... Vietnam

16:20 ... Shanghai

22:50 ... Tel Aviv

23:10 ... London

23:55 ... Damascus

Royal Wings (RW)

09:50 ... Jordan

20:50 ... Egypt

MARKET PRICE

Uppercase price

Apple

Banana

Banana (imported)

Cabbage

Carrot

Cauliflower

Cucumber (large)

Cucumber (small)

Eggplant

Garlic

Grapes

Lemon

Marrow (large)

Marrow (small)

Onion (green)

Onion (dry)

Olive (green)

Olive (black)

Orange

Pear

Pepper (hot)

Pepper (sweet)

Potato

Spinach

Spring Bean

Tomato

By Francesca Ciriaci

Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Ending a

long debate over the

construction of three dams in

the Jordan Valley, which

threatened to open a

painful gap between nature

conservationists and

decision-makers, Jordan Valley

Authority (JVA) Secretary

General Dureid Mahasneh

declared that "the pres-

ervation of the environment

is a precondition for the

launching of the project."

The three-month debate

saw the conservationists'

worries about safeguard-

ing Jordan's natural beau-

ties opposed to decision

makers' quest for further

social and economic

development.

When first announced,

the project for the con-

struction of the dams at

Wadi Hassa (Tannour

Dam), Wadi Waleh and

Wadi Mujib was hailed by

many as it was supposed to

provide the Kingdom with

an additional annual 55

million cubic metres of

water.

However, at the same

time, it met with strong

criticism from the Royal

Society for the Conserva-

tion of Nature (RSCN), on

the grounds that the con-

struction of the dams

would irretrievably dam-

age the eco-system of

Wadi Mujib, widely con-

sidered one of the most

spectacular features along

the Dead Sea shore.

In fact the RSCN last

September issued a fact

sheet strongly rejecting the

plan.

Since then, the JVA and

the RSCN "are working

hand in hand to ensure that

the project is environmen-

tally sustainable," Dr.

Mahasneh said, adding

that he had held "more

than one meeting" with

RSCN president Anis

Mousher in this regard.

He also said the JVA and

the RSCN are currently

working together on a

study to assess the envi-

ronmental impact of the

three dams on the region.

Dr. Mahasneh added that

the JVA is now seeking

funds for the implemen-

tion of the project, which

will be launched "only

after the environmental

study is concluded."

According to Dr. Mahas-

neh, water use plans for

the proposed dams state

that 40 per cent of the

waters collected will be

used for industry, mainly

potash plants. Another 40

per cent, he said, is slated

for the tourism develop-

ment area of Sweimeh, on

the Dead Sea shore, 10 per

cent should be used for

domestic consumption,

and the remaining 10 per

cent for irrigation pur-

poses.

Stressing the social and

economic benefits of the

project, Dr. Mahasneh said

that the dams are going to

support industry and

tourism projects in the

region, by maintaining and

creating job opportunities

for local residents.

"Many people from

Karak and the Safi area are

already employed at the

potash plant, and, when

new hotels will open on

the Dead Sea shore, resi-

dents will also benefit

from increased job oppor-

tunities."

Notwithstanding possi-

ble benefits from tourist

development of the area,

many environmentalists

and conservationists

argued that the construc-

tion of luxury hotels will

not positively affect the

local people's lives, as

they have little chance to

be hired in such tourist

facilities.

"If the local population

will not benefit from the

tourism development of

the area, the government,

once again, should be

blamed for not having

supplied them with the

proper vocational training

in tourism."

In the fact sheet issued

following the announce-

ment of the plan for the

construction of the three

dams, the RSCN also

argued that providing

irrigation water to promote

agriculture in dry areas

was worthwhile.

Responding to charges

that using vital fresh water

to grow yet more water-

dependent crops in dry

areas is futile, Dr. Mahas-

neh said that resources

should not be employed to

promote only one sector, at

the expense of others.

"Development is an inte-

grated process" and should

involve all economic sec-

tors, he said.

To those pointing out

that the agriculture sector

is highly water consuming

and employs less than

seven per cent of the coun-

try's labour force, coor-

dinating to only six per

cent of the GNP, Dr. Ma-

hasneh answered

rejecting as "terrible and

irresponsible" the possi-

bility of "destroying the

agriculture sector, with all

Firemen put out freight shuttle blaze in mid-Channel Tunnel

CALAIS, France (AFP) — Firemen from France and Britain put out a fire aboard a freight shuttle in the middle of the Channel Tunnel Tuesday after fighting the blaze throughout the night.

It was the first serious incident since the 1994 opening of the tunnel. Eight people were injured at 6:15 a.m. (0515 GMT), operating company Eurotunnel reported. Firemen had virtually extinguished the fire, which started aboard a truck. Two of the eight injured suffered severe smoke inhalation, and six trucks were destroyed. The other 26 passengers and crew were under observation.

Eurotunnel shares shed 3.5 per cent to 88 pence — about four per cent — when the London stock exchange opened, but recovered slightly by mid-morning.

Eurotunnel security director Clive Durrant said on BBC radio that a bi-national emergency plan had "worked exactly as we anticipated. The operation was led by the French although 100 fire officers from Kent have been involved in containing the incident."

A spokesman for the company said the passengers were evacuated into a service tunnel and safety in only four minutes. "We had

a full-scale international emergency exercise earlier this month and that undoubtedly helped."

Passengers booked on the first two Eurostar trains Tuesday between Paris and London and vice versa were being transported by plane or being transferred to Calais-Dover ferries, and put back on Eurostar at the tunnel terminals, French railway officials said.

A spokesman for Kent firemen said firefighters worked in difficult conditions to put out the blaze.

"It was very dark and very hot down there," he said. "All the lights were out and firefighters were basically having to feel their way along the tunnel and they could only stay down there for a maximum of 10 minutes before we had to bring them back because of the heat. Crews on both sides worked very well together."

Eurotunnel officials said the tunnel would remain closed to traffic Tuesday morning and probably reopen to partial traffic later in the day.

Meanwhile hospital sources in Lille said the two people most seriously affected by fumes from the blaze were in intensive care but their condition did not give rise to concern.

A joint statement from Eurotunnel and French local authorities said the blaze also damaged the rear locomotive of the train.

Firemen wearing breathing apparatus had been confronted by a wall of heat, and could only stay for a short time at the scene before being relieved by colleagues, the statement said.

The fire broke out around 10:00 p.m. Monday aboard the shuttle, which was carrying 29 trucks and their 31 occupants, together with three train crew, when it was 17 kilometres from the French coast on its way to England.

Rescue workers, including paramedics and firemen were at the scene within minutes and transferred most of the occupants of the stricken shuttle to a car shuttle heading for France.

The two worst-affected were later taken to hospital in Lille, and six others to Calais. Among these eight were the train crew, who were all French.

The remaining 26 people were sent for observation to hospital in Boulogne.

The sub-prefect of Calais, Jean-Pascal Gogez, said earlier that one of the lorries had been carrying an unspecified dangerous load,

but it was not the one to catch fire first. Firemen said one vehicle seemed to have been carrying polystyrene, which gives off toxic fumes.

Freight shuttles carry trucks on trains of open cars, with their drivers travelling in separate coaches during the 30-minute journey.

Unlike on passenger car shuttles, there is no fire-proof partition between wagons.

The incident occurred only 10 days after an annual security exercise to test the reaction capability of emergency services in conditions as near to real as possible.

The blaze broke out shortly after services resumed in the wake of a two-hour stoppage called by French unions to protest a plan to shed jobs, the first such action since the tunnel opened.

As well as the freight and car shuttles, the tunnel is used by the high-speed Eurostar passenger trains connecting London with Paris and Brussels.

Eurotunnel said the remaining problem was how to get the damaged train out of the tunnel. It would probably be split into two, with one half being towed on to England and the other half back to France.



Cuban President Fidel Castro (left) poses with Pope John Paul II prior to their talks at the Vatican Tuesday. This is their first meeting and could pave the way for a papal trip to Cuba (Reuters photo)

Castro meets Pope at Vatican

VATICAN CITY (R) — Pope John Paul II and President Fidel Castro met for the first time Tuesday at an historic Vatican audience that could pave the way for a papal trip to Communist Cuba.

Mr. Castro, one of the world's few remaining Marxist leaders, was whisked into the Vatican under heavy security for the audience in the Pope's frescoed private study.

His motorcade of 16 cars, one with a light machine gun poking through its sunroof, swept into St Peter's Square with sirens wailing. Mr. Castro was hidden from view behind his car's darkened windows.

All media access for the meeting, the Pope's most significant since he received then Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in December 1989, was cancelled at an hour's notice.

The 76-year-old Pope's personal crusades encouraged the peoples of Eastern Europe, including in his native Poland, to shake off Communism in the revolutions that swept the region in 1989 and brought down the Berlin wall.

Deputy Vatican spokesman Father Ciro Benedetti said the audience began as scheduled at 11 a.m. (1000 GMT). It was expected to last about one hour.

Vatican sources said the Pope was expected to call on Mr. Castro to introduce

democratic political reforms and discuss human rights on the island, which is still about 42 per cent Catholic.

Mr. Castro, answering reporters' questions Sunday at the close of a U.N.-sponsored World Food Summit in Rome, suggested that the Pope could visit Cuba any time he wished.

For years a papal trip to the Caribbean island had seemed an impossibility. The Pope is due to go to Brazil next October when a stop could be added to Cuba, the only Spanish-speaking country the Roman Catholic leader has not visited in Latin America.

"The last hallmark of Communism in the West is presenting himself to the pontiff of Rome and that means that the doors of Cuba are officially open to the Pope, probably next year," Italian state television RAI said in a commentary.

"Fidel Castro, atheistic and priest-eater, is forgetting the past and looking to the future by going via the Pope," it said.

Mr. Castro, who made clear at a news conference Saturday that he was not about to change political course, was almost certain to ask the Pope to speak out even more forcefully against the 34-year-old U.S. embargo on his island nation.

The Vatican sources said

the pontiff was expected to press the 70-year-old revolutionary to allow the church more educational and religious freedom and more access to the media.

Shortly after Mr. Castro took control in 1959, Cuba was declared a Socialist state. Some 350 Catholic schools were nationalised and more than 100 priests expelled. Freedom of worship and religious instruction are limited to church premises.

The restrictions on the Roman Catholic church now are similar to those in place in the Soviet Union and parts of Eastern Europe until the collapse of the iron curtain.

The local church, which the Pope rewarded for its hardships by naming the first Cuban cardinal in 1994, has often clashed with what it calls the government's atheistic philosophy.

Ironically, exactly 24 hours before his meeting with Mr. Castro, the Pope met for the fourth time with Mr. Gorbachev, whose "Perestroika" restructuring reforms began the domino effect that led to the end of Communism in Eastern Europe.

"Your holiness, I recall our first meeting here which led to the start of so many changes both inside and outside of the Soviet Union," Mr. Gorbachev said, according to a spokesman.

Cambodian premier warns of military reaction following murder of relative

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — A gunman shot dead the brother-in-law of Cambodian second Prime Minister Hun Sen, a senior government official, outside a restaurant in central Phnom Penh Tuesday.

Colonel Kov Samuth, 39, deputy director of the Interior Ministry's economics branch, died of massive chest wounds shortly after arriving at Phnom Penh's Calmette Hospital, police said.

Mr. Hun Sen vowed a military response in a speech broadcast on national radio just hours after the killing of Kov Samuth, his wife's brother.

"It is time for me to prepare the forces to fight in the coming few hours or days if it is necessary to protect the people's lives," he said.

Col. Kov Samuth was gunned down outside a popular restaurant by an unidentified assailant who escaped on a motorcycle with the help of at least one accomplice.

Mr. Hun Sen said he believed the murder was an attempt to intimidate members of an alleged underground Khmer Rouge terrorist cell operating in Phnom Penh from defecting.

"I wish to inform my beloved people... that if the underground group faces risks (in defecting), I will have an immediate reaction because a military reaction to provide safety for our people is my duty."

On Saturday, 10 men claiming to be members of the cell held a press conference at Hun Sen's house in which they claimed that the unrecog-

nised opposition Khmer Nation Party (KNP) was a Khmer Rouge front and that members of the royalist FUNCINPEC Party had conspired to cover up the link.

They further alleged that the Khmer Rouge had planted agents in different political parties as well as in senior positions in the police and military.

KNP officials and Funcinpec president, First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh, have angrily denied the men's allegations which were presented with no supporting evidence except for a six-page typed confession.

But in his speech, Mr. Hun Sen said he had direct proof of the allegations and warned "politicians and political parties" not to interfere with his work in convincing the rest of the underground group to defect.

He said three of the men had identity cards signed by Prince Ranariddh and rejected the prince's call for the 10 men to be brought in for intensive questioning by Funcinpec officials and the media saying: "The questions and answers will have to come later on."

"These guys have to be under control of Hun Sen, no one will be allowed to touch them," he said. "After the work is done, everything will be done according to the law."

Kov Samuth's murder comes as tensions between Hun Sen's former Communist Party (CPP) and Funcinpec — the two main partners in the current coalition government — are near an all-time high

following the accusations.

Prince Ranariddh, who left Cambodia Tuesday for a meeting of the world economic forum in Hong Kong before Mr. Hun Sen's speech, said Funcinpec would issue a condolence letter condemning the murder.

But he insisted that "if there is any tension, it does not come from the Funcinpec side."

"As you are very well aware, I could have reacted in a very violent manner to such an organized press conference and declaration at Hun Sen's house, but I did not," the prince told reporters.

He added that he thought such unsupported allegations were "bad for the country."

In his speech, Mr. Hun Sen said that after the allegations were made he had ordered all "military units who are faithful to peace and (who) support my action" to be on alert for threats against the defectors but had neglected to protect his brother-in-law.

"That was my mistake," he said.

But he appealed for Khmer Rouge moles hidden around the country to come out and defect, promising that even the men who killed his brother-in-law would receive amnesty.

Kov Samuth, is survived by his wife, Lim Sitha, and a 13-year-old daughter.

U.K. MPs reject full handgun ban after Dunblane

LONDON (R) — Britain's parliament voted Monday to reject a complete ban on the private ownership of handguns despite pleas from parents of children killed in March's Dunblane massacre.

It backed a government proposal to restrict the weapons, which some legislators warned could leave a loophole in the law which would allow another crazed gunman to commit mass murder.

The main opposition parties backed an amendment to a gun control bill going through parliament which would have made handgun ownership illegal except for certain professionals.

But with the conservative government instructing its members to oppose the amendment, it was defeated by 306 votes to 281.

Proposing the amendment, rebel Conservative MP Robert Hughes praised the Dunblane parents looking on from the public gallery for a dogged campaign for a ban which has resulted in a petition signed by 750,000 people.

"They don't think that their relatives can be brought back. But what they recognise is that if we leave handguns in the hands of private citizens, as regrettably the government proposals would do, we run the risk that once again we would have a tragedy caused by legally-held weapons," Mr. Hughes said.

Sixteen young children and their primary school teacher died in a school gun in Dunblane when crazed loner Thomas Hamilton walked in and started blasting away with handguns for which police had granted him a licence.

Under the government proposals, designed to protect the sport of target shooting, handguns of .22 calibre would be permitted provided they were kept under stringent security conditions in registered gun clubs.

"If it is possible to provide the public with the protection they need and deserve while allowing some limited legitimate sporting activities to continue, it is the government's duty to take that course," Interior Minister Michael Howard said.

At least four Conservative members defied party managers to back a total ban. With the Conservatives having a majority of only one in parliament, this could have led to a defeat.

But the opposition Labour Party proved unable to get solid backing from non-conservative MPs.

Basking a total ban, Conservative former Interior Minister David Mellor predicted that if the government proposals went through, people would "trade down" into .22 weapons.

"And .22s are capable of just as much damage as Thomas Hamilton did with a more powerful pistol," he said.

In an emotional speech, George Robertson, the opposition Labour Party's Scottish affairs spokesman, who lives in Dunblane, pleaded with MPs to act to prevent another tragedy.

"If we were tonight to leave a loophole in the firearms law big enough for another mass murderer... to walk through, then we would never be forgiven or deserve to be forgiven," he said.

Earlier in the day, people from Dunblane, flown to London by a Scottish newspaper, lobbied MPs to support the complete ban.

A few Conservatives said the government proposals went too far to restrict the right to practise a legitimate sport.

Separatist elections threaten to inflame Caucasus further

MOSCOW (AFP) — Elections this month in breakaway regions of the Caucasus threaten to inflame tensions in a region already shaken by the war in Chechnya.

Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze has been powerless to elect polls on Nov. 10 to elect a "president" of South Ossetia — which wants to quit Georgia and join with Russian North Ossetia — and legislative elections Saturday in Abkhazia.

Tbilisi effectively lost control of South Ossetia in 1991, and Mr. Shevardnadze's plea, that the poll bring an agreement reached last August for prior negotiations to be held with Russian mediators and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), was ignored.

The speaker of the South Ossetian parliament, Ludwig Chibirov, was declared first president of the breakaway region after gaining

60 per cent of the vote.

The outcome of elections for a new parliament for Abkhazia could depend on whether they strengthen the authority of the assembly's speaker, Vladislav Ardzinba, enabling him to reach some sort of compromise with Tbilisi.

Abkhazia broke away after defeating the Georgian army in a war that ended in 1993, but Mr. Ardzinba is under strong pressure from Russia and Western European countries to accept the status of autonomous republic within Georgia.

However elements in the parliament and the army are pushing for continued independence.

The riskiest poll in the region, however, is in Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian-populated enclave in Azerbaijan which fought a six-year war against Baku's forces, conquered 8,000 square kilometres of territory and expelled the Azeri population to set up a buffer

zone.

Some 100,000 voters of the Nagorno-Karabakh vote for their first "president" Sunday, with victory likely to go to the current strongman in the territory, Robert Kocharyan.

Baku has called the polls "a serious diplomatic error," warning that they risk to hamper if not halt the difficult negotiations on the enclave status being carried out under the aegis of the OSCE since May 1994.

Russia, the United States and other countries have expressed their anxiety at the move when the negotiations are far from achieving any result.

But the authorities in Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh, backed by Yerevan and the widespread Armenian diaspora, seem set on continuing the policy of boldness that has so far paid off, albeit at the cost of thousands killed in the war.

N. Korea to close border liaison office

SEOUL (R) — North Korea said Tuesday it would temporarily close its liaison office at the border village of Panmunjom, the country's official Radio Pyongyang reported.

"We will temporarily stop operations and withdraw our representatives from our liaison office at Panmunjom from Nov. 20," Radio Pyongyang said in a broadcast monitored in Tokyo.

North Korea's official radio said there was no longer a need for the office as South Korean President Kim Young-Sam had said Seoul was cutting off all dialogue with Pyongyang.

It said Mr. Kim made the statement in an interview with the Washington Post on Nov. 9.

"The reason for the liaison office's existence itself has ceased to exist," the radio said.

The liaison office was set up in 1992 for government-to-government exchanges between north and South Korea at a rare moment of warmth in inter-Korean relations. In that year, a meeting of the two Korean premiers resulted in a non-aggression and reconciliation pact.

Aside from a Red Cross office, the liaison office is the only point of civilian contact between the rival Koreas.

There is a separate channel of communication through the military Armistice Commission, which oversees the truce that ended the 1950-53 Korean War.

On Tuesday, a commission meeting was held in Panmunjom to discuss North Korean demands for the return of the bodies of 24 North Koreans among a crew of 26 that landed in the South on a submarine in September.

South Korea has said it will not return the bodies until North Korea apologises for the submarine incursion.

Representatives of the U.S.-led United Nations Command at the commission meeting told Northern military officers the matter should be resolved between North and South Korea, a U.N. Command statement said.

Diplomats said the closure of the liaison office would have little practical effect, and the North Korean move was mainly symbolic.

Top Japan welfare bureaucrat resigns over new scandal

TOKYO (R) — A top bureaucrat resigned Tuesday amid media reports that he took cash and other gifts from a business executive in a new scandal at Japan's troubled health and welfare ministry.

A senior official of the main opposition Shinshinto (New Frontier Party) said the party would take up the new scandal in parliament as a classic example of the corruption bred by Japan's "iron triangle" of bureaucrats, business and politics.

Health Minister Junichiro Koizumi told a news conference he accepted Vice Health Minister Nobuharu Okamitsu's resignation after media reports said he took unrepeated gifts from a man running a private welfare institution.

The affair incurred the wrath of Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto, who has pledged bureaucratic reform as a pillar of his new government.

"I regret this very much because we are striving for administrative reform," Mr. Hashimoto told his cabinet. "This is a (result of a) loss of ethics among bureaucrats."

The daily Asahi Shimbun reported Monday that Okamitsu, the top bureaucrat in the powerful health and welfare ministry, received a golf club membership worth 13 million Yen

(\$116,000) and the use of a luxury car from Hiroshi Koyama, president of a firm which runs homes for the aged.

Okamitsu denied having received the golf membership, but club records showed he played using the membership in question. Okamitsu acknowledged he had been borrowing the car this year.

Golf memberships are highly prized and are considered to be assets in Japan.

In addition, the daily Yomiuri Shimbun and Kyodo news agency reported that Okamitsu took 60 million Yen (\$535,000) in unrepeated donations from Koyama. In a statement he delivered to the ministry, Okamitsu denied taking the cash.

Since 1990, Koyama's old people's homes have been granted a total of 360 million Yen (\$3.21 million) in government subsidies for erecting specialised welfare institutions.

Koyama was reported to have boasted repeatedly about his ties to health ministry bureaucrats, who have power over who is granted subsidies. Police have arrested Koyama on bribery charges unrelated to Okamitsu.

Domestic media said police had also arrested a former health ministry official on suspicion of taking

bribes from Koyama. The former official ran unsuccessfully as a candidate of Mr. Hashimoto's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in last month's general election, the reports said.

"This should be treated not as a case of a single official taking gifts, but as an example of the over-regulated society which is the seedbed of this kind of corruption and indeed is a major obstacle to enriching our economy," the senior Shinshinto official told reporters.

"We intend to take this up in parliament as an example of what is wrong with Japanese society and of what needs to be changed," the opposition party official said.

The latest affair follows other scandals at the ministry, which holds jurisdiction over the lucrative medical and pharmaceutical industries, as well as welfare institutions.

Last month, a senior ministry official was arrested for criminal negligence over his alleged role in the spread of the HIV virus among haemophiliacs through untreated blood products.

Some 1,800 Japanese haemophiliacs contracted HIV, which causes AIDS, through ministry-sanctioned usage of the products.

One of the first to be killed, Malaysian tourist Moh Yee William Ng, was still holding a dinner knife in his hand when police later arrived at the scene.

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Kayaku Corp. plant and residents within a kilometer were evacuated after the blaze spread to a nearby forest, reports said. Coast guard helicopters

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od's mercy and blessings.

Palestinians to seek a billion dollar in aid at donor conference today

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Palestinians will ask for nearly one billion dollars from donor nations in Paris Wednesday in a bid to bolster their economy, which has been crippled by a nearly year-long Israeli closure.

President Yasser Arafat will attend the conference of some 40 donor nations and international agencies, where his Palestinian National Authority will present its investment needs for 1997.

The conference comes after a disastrous year for the Palestinians, during which the donor programme has largely had to concentrate on keeping the economy afloat amid strict Israeli travel restrictions.

"Because of the turmoil this year and the closure, donor countries have had to refunnel their money away from middle-term projects building infrastructure into short-term projects like job creation," Ali Khader, deputy representative for the World Bank, told AFP.

Instead of building roads, for example, donor funds have gone into employing

Palestinians to whitewash buildings in Gaza or dig trenches using manual labour instead of machines to employ more workers, he said.

Some \$165 million out of \$414 million delivered to the Palestinians this year have been moved into short-term projects.

The closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, imposed after a series of anti-Israeli suicide bombings in February and March, has prevented Palestinian workers and exports from entering Israel and, at times, even blocked movement between West Bank cities.

Palestinian officials say the closure has caused up to \$9 million a day in losses and pushed unemployment up to 60 per cent in Gaza and 35 per cent in the West Bank.

"Countries look at the discouraging political situation here and they have in many cases decided to postpone their donations," said Adnan Al Amad, director of aid coordination at the Palestinian Economic

Council for Development and Reconstruction (PEC-DARI).

Palestinians have frequently complained of donor nations' failure to live up to their pledges since the aid programme was launched in 1993 in a bid to build the economy in the territories parallel to negotiations on the establishment of Palestinian autonomy.

Donor countries have so far provided only half of the total \$2.4 billion they have pledged since 1994.

They promised over \$830 million for 1996 but reduced the amount in a meeting in January, where they set a goal to deliver \$500 million over the year. Around \$414 million has been delivered since, according to Mr. Khader.

Meanwhile, the World Bank has denounced an "economic embargo" imposed by Israel on the Palestinian territories and said it was harming investment prospects for the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

"Private companies do not invest in countries that are

under an economic embargo," said Knudsen, the World Bank representative in the territories, told AFP.

"Effectively, there is an economic embargo in place" in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, he said.

Israel has sealed off the Palestinian territories intermittently since March following a wave of suicide bombings in occupied Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

The move has driven tens of thousands of Palestinians who once held jobs in Israel into unemployment and choked the Palestinian economy.

The blockade was eased recently "to avoid dangerously aggravating the economic difficulties of the Palestinians."

"It's very difficult for private investors to come in and to make investments," Mr. Knudsen said. "They cannot move their commodities or move themselves (in the autonomous territories)." The World Bank is the key organisation in charge of channelling international aid to the Palestinians.

"There is no doubt that the Palestinian economy has suffered considerably," the World Bank representative said. "There has been no peace dividend so far. In fact there has been an economic decline."

Gross national product of the Palestinian territories has dropped by 23 per cent in four years, according to a recent U.N. report.

The World Bank representative stressed that the countries that pledged \$2.4 billion in aid to the Palestinians in 1993 "are not

willing to pay for closure" because it exacerbates unemployment and tax revenues decline.

This situation forces the international community to sacrifice long-term investments necessary to launch the Palestinian economy, fill the budget deficit gap and create temporary jobs.

Mr. Knudsen estimated that next year donor countries will unblock nearly \$500 million for the Palestinians.

France mulls easing taxes on the rich

PARIS (R) — The French government is considering easing a special tax on the wealthy so that rich people do not flee the country, Urban Affairs and Integration Minister Eric Raoult said Sunday. "We would not want the hen that lays a golden egg to leave...allowing capital to escape, little by little, out of the country," Mr. Raoult said in an interview on French Radio J.

He acknowledged that the so-called "solidarity tax on great wealth" was popular with the public but said he believed the right balance could be found to keep the public satisfied while encouraging the wealthy to remain on French soil.

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can handle certain responsibilities today if you stick to them and are precise. Find better methods for use in the days ahead. Later tonight you can seek the advice of a bigwig to complete any new career activities.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Be tactful today in handling a clever partner, so that you can complete any assignments which are presented. Don't commit yourself to any further outside interests at this time or you could find yourself in great difficulties.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Your career activities seem annoying to those fellow associates as the week opens, however, keep at it studiously. Avoid the limelight later this evening or you could find yourself in an embarrassing situation which you don't need.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Do whatever will soothe your mate's feelings today and thereby bring harmony to your residence. Carry through with the tasks you have scheduled and thereby you can achieve the prosperity and success you desire.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Take time today to get rid of any tensions at home so that your loved ones will be appreciative of the harmony which exists. Show that you are truly devoted and affectionate towards your mate by doing special gestures.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Make sure your reply today to questions accurately where your career activities are concerned so that those in authority will be appreciative. Don't permit outsiders to upset you this evening so that tonight can be pleasant.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Handle that important financial matter today in an efficient manner, then you can have fun with close friends. Get the data you need for making out reports, which are important to those in authority and thereby gain your success.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Don't be so eager today to have your own way or you could disturb the feeling of a bigwig who could make your business environment difficult. Forget a plan tonight which could cost you too much money and effort.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You may seem deadlocked today at gaining some personal aim, however, keep plugging along and you can achieve your success. Later this evening you are able to get it without too much effort on your part and recognition.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Do not try today to convince a stubborn friend with your views since he or she has their own point of view. Plan how to fix a difficult situation which is present and thereby you can achieve success through a bigwig noticing you.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't go to any bigwig for a favour today as he or she will be in a foul mood and not likely to be of assistance. Get your career activities completed and everything will be fine. Avoid an irate friend this evening.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Use mature judgement today and rely less on some hunch which keeps pecking at you for eventual resolution. Study that civic matter later this evening and devise a plan of action whereby you can achieve great success.

Minister abolishes 'a'

ABOL RAZZAQ TBEISH, Minister of Agriculture, has abolished the use of the letter 'a' in the names of agricultural products, saying that the change would help in the export of these products.

He indicated that the change would help in the export of these products, as many countries do not accept products with the letter 'a' in their names.

Morocco privatisation chief wants unlimited sales

RABAT (R) — Morocco's privatisation minister wants to sweep away curbs on selling state holdings, including sectors such as electricity and water.

"I don't see any monopoly which is still worth keeping. Transportation — we have to open our skies. Road transport — everyone can do it. Tobacco, I believe the government should be authorised to privatise all entities and corporations," Minister Abou Rahmane Saadi told Reuters.

"What we consider strategic is not what we have considered in the past as strategic. And even strategic activities, we believe they don't have to be public," he said.

Mr. Saadi said he wanted strategic privatisation aimed at improving investment, modernisation and recruitment, rather than sales of assets simply to maximise revenues.

His ministry wants to change the policy of setting minimum prices for asset

sales and of publishing specific lists of holdings on offer.

"We have received the green light on the principle of the changes but we are still negotiating (with the government) the final wording," before proposals go to parliament, he said.

Telecommunications will be one area opened up, under its own legislation, with a regulatory body created.

"I think the government should be authorised to transfer all public participations...Do we really need an electricity monopoly? Is it the best thing for consumers, for the Moroccan economy?" said the minister in a weekend interview.

"Our philosophy is to privatise the maximum which can be privatised," he said, echoing his words last month to an emerging markets conference in New York when he spoke of tackling "the big ones" — to sell part of the railroad or national airline, to open up the port authority,

and to hive off the downstream phosphate processing.

Morocco has so far transferred in the private sector 27 of the 77 firms listed for sale, and 18 of 37 hotels on the list.

This has raised 9.7 billion dirhams (\$1.1 billion), with 10 firms and four hotels sold in whole or part to foreign buyers, who accounted for 27 per cent of total privatisation revenue.

Buyers have committed themselves to invest a further \$260 million. But sales have brought some hard lessons.

"We found ourselves in a difficult situation, mainly for hotels...because sometimes we were forced to declare a winner...with a slightly higher price and not very good investment programme...and others were out of the running with very attractive ideas and investment programmes," he said.

Mr. Saadi wants a single 10-strong commission to set an indicative, not minimum,

price. Investors could offer more or less, and the government would also not be obliged to sell.

His ministry this month advertised nine hotels for sale at a minimum total price of \$11 million, 30 per cent below that asked when they were first floated two years ago.

"The market responded (then) negatively, they were too high. We didn't even know what the market was able to pay," he said.

Mr. Saadi said he expected a positive response now although the situation had worsened — "when the management of the hotels knew (they are for sale), they stop seeking clients and developing reservations."

His ministry had also found that some companies originally on the list could not be sold without changes to the laws governing their creation.

These experiences have prompted Mr. Saadi to try to avoid any listing. He would prefer the principle of all being open for sale, with the government announcing that "X" company was now on offer, or perhaps a "negative list" of those not for sale.

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.5026	0.5971	1.2680	111.30	1.3415	1512.40	1.6850	5.0814
DE Mark	0.6655	1.0000	0.3970	0.8437	74.07	0.8926	1008.05	1.1214	3.3817
GB Sterling	1.6748	2.5173	1.0000	2.1232	166.36	2.2467	2533.27	2.8224	8.5113
CH Franc	0.7886	1.1841	0.4703	1.0000	77.77	1.0575	1192.37	1.3289	4.0052
JP Yen	0.0090	0.1347	0.5357	1.1381	1.0000	1.2044	13.59	151.27	4.5610
CA Dollar	0.7454	1.1161	0.4455	0.9436	1.20	1.0000	1125.68	1.2531	3.7606
IT Lira	0.0007	0.0010	0.0004	0.0009	1361.47	0.0058	1.0000	11.13	3.3550
NL Guilder	0.5935	0.8913	0.3540	0.8523	66.01	0.7959	897.62	1.0000	3.0145
FR Franc	0.1968	0.2958	0.1174	0.2640	21.89	0.2640	33.16	33.1600	1.0000

Energy									
Oil	Last	Previous	Mid-East Currencies						
Brent	23.25	23.00	Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	
WTI	24.20	23.80	SA Riyal	0.2068	0.4008	0.15918	0.33831	29.7036	
Bony	23.25	23.00	AE Dirham	0.2723	0.40922	0.16254	0.34545	30.3306	
Dubai	20.75	21.10	KV Dinar	3.3557	5.04286	2.00321	4.25713	373.832	
UL Gas	212.00	217.00	BF Dinar	0.3765	3.99202	1.58554	3.37041	295.888	
			CY Pound	2.182	3.2781	1.202	2.7662	242.845	

Metal Prices									
Metal	Bid	Offer	Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)						
Gold (ozs)	378.2	378.7	Period	1	2	3	6	12	Year
Silver (ozs)	4.89	4.91	USD	5.25	5.37	5.37	5.46	5.50	
Platinum (ozs)	383.5	384.5	GBP	5.06	5.25	5.31	5.56	5.75	
AL (3 Months)	1443	1444	JPY	0.46	0.32	0.38	0.43	0.62	
CU (3 Months)	2210	2213	DEM	3.00	3.07	3.05	3.15	3.19	
Zinc (3 Months)	1059	1060	FRF	3.29	3.31	3.37	3.42	3.50	
Lead (3 Months)	700	701	CHF	1.60	1.63	1.61	2.00	2.03	
Ni (3 Months)	6825	6830	ITL	7.37	7.12	6.89	6.68	6.59	

Main Equity Indices									
Bourse	Index	Value	Change	% Chg	High	Low	Pr Chg		
New York	DOW JONES	6383.81	36.9	0.58	6384.18	6347.28	6346.91		
New York	S&P 500	740.17	3.15	0.43	740.17	736.87	737.02		
London	FT-SE 100	3970.8	8.5	0.21	3971.6	3954.1	3962.1		
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20958.18	159.81	0.77	20956.2	20732.8	20796.4		
Paris	CAC 40	2235.95	7.14	0.32	2236	2223.28	2228.81		
Frankfurt	DAX	2764.09	0.25	0.01	2773.84	2750.72	2763.84		

Energy									
Commodity	Last	Delivery	JOD Currencies						
Coffee (c/lbs)	120.33	Spot	Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1358	Spot	US Dollar	0.708	0.710				
Sugar (\$/ton)	310.9	Spot	GB Sterling	1.102	1.1879				
Wheat (\$/ton)	133	Spot	DE Mark	0.4709	0.4733				
Soya (c/lbs)	22.33	Spot	CH Franc	0.5575	0.5603				
Tea (c/lbs)	110	Spot	FR Franc	0.1392	0.1399				
Barley (\$/sh)	2.18	Spot	JP Yen	0.6333	0.6365				
Rice (\$/ton)	470	Spot	NL Guilder	0.4199	0.422				
			IT Lira	0.4673	0.4698				

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.

THE Daily Crossword by Chuck Deodene

ACROSS

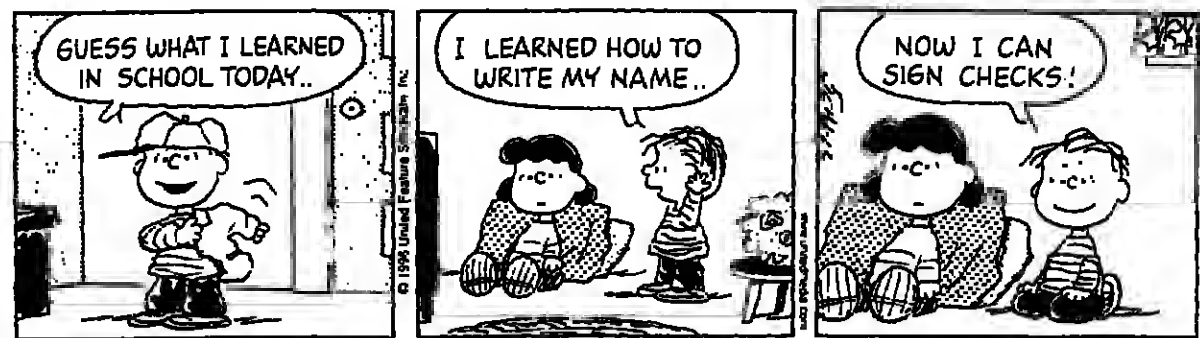
- Bivouac
- Prosperous time
- Hippo-like mammal
- Exam type
- First name in advice
- Win by —
- Sluggish
- SC — (armen)
- Mell Lazarus cartoon
- Pierre's pal
- Suffer consequences
- Vanzetti's partner
- Land of tennis
- Good
- Kind of cube
- Sher's tow
- Tall
- Deface
- "I — Camera"
- Grad
- Clean a bass
- Gator's kin
- Abolitionist
- Tuner
- "You're it" game
- Full of pluck
- Patella site
- Nettle
- Toothpaste holder
- PDC
- Perhaps
- Quick campaign visit
- Office transmission
- Waste maker
- Croaker
- Banquet
- Amend
- Bronte heroine
- Distant
- Bond portrayer
- Statistics
- Waist girder

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DOWN

- Layer
- Rum cake
- Heed
- Note of remembrance
- Legendarily
- Buccaneers' home
- Circumstance
- "Woe —"
- Stem
- Sulk
- Hillary's conquest
- Quahog
- Animalistic
- Reflection
- Mayberry deputy
- Frenzied
- Risque
- Standing
- Lust for life
- With shag on the floor
- Canibean land
- Inflator
- Type of bunny
- Cubic meter
- Inspired
- Apply force
- Impact sound
- Heavenly ring
- Analogy words
- Protein-rich bean
- Sour
- Greek theaters
- Small amount

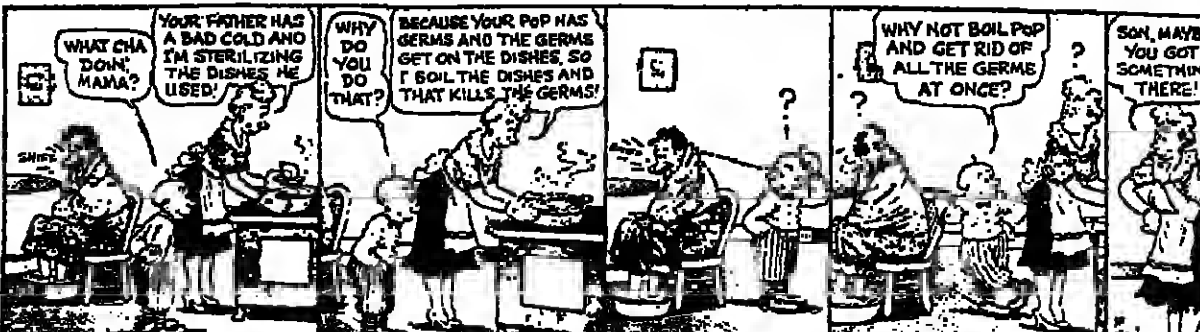
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



Minister abolishes 'a'

ABOL RAZZAQ TBEISH, Minister of Agriculture, has abolished the use of the letter 'a' in the names of agricultural products, saying that the change would help in the export of these products.

He indicated that the change would help in the export of these products, as many countries do not accept products with the letter 'a' in their names.

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Business

Tabba

sector

Horoscope

Forecast for Wednesday, November 20, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can handle certain responsibilities today if you stick to them and are precise. Find better methods for use in the days ahead. Later tonight you can seek the advice of a bigwig to complete any new career activities.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Be tactful today in handling a clever partner, so that you can complete any assignments which are presented. Don't commit yourself to any further outside interests at this time or you could find yourself in great difficulties.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Your career activities seem annoying to those fellow associates as the week opens, however, keep at it studiously. Avoid the limelight later this evening or you could find yourself in an embarrassing situation which you don't need.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Do whatever will soothe your mate's feelings today and thereby bring harmony to your residence. Carry through with the tasks you have scheduled and thereby you can achieve the prosperity and success you desire.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Take time today to get rid of any tensions at home so that your loved ones will be appreciative of the harmony which exists. Show that you are truly devoted and affectionate towards your mate by doing special gestures.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Make sure your reply today to questions accurately where your career activities are concerned so that those in authority will be appreciative. Don't permit outsiders to upset you this evening so that tonight can be pleasant.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Handle that important financial matter today in an efficient manner, then you can have fun with close friends. Get the data you need for making out reports, which are important to those in authority and thereby gain your success.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Don't be so eager today to have your own way or you could disturb the feeling of a bigwig who could make your business environment difficult. Forget a plan tonight which could cost you too much money and effort.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You may seem deadlocked today at gaining some personal aim, however, keep plugging along and you can achieve your success. Later this evening you are able to get it without too much effort on your part and recognition.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Do not try today to convince a stubborn friend with your views since he or she has their own point of view. Plan how to fix a difficult situation which is present and thereby you can achieve success through a bigwig noticing you.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Don't go to any bigwig for a favour today as he or she will be in a foul mood and not likely to be of assistance. Get your career activities completed and everything will be fine. Avoid an irate friend this evening.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Use mature judgement today and rely less on some hunch which keeps pecking at you for eventual resolution. Study that civic matter later this evening and devise a plan of action whereby you can achieve great success.

Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye.

THE BETTER HALF

Comics are now a

Call

JUMBLE

THAT'S THE WAY TO WIN

THE OVER THE HILL FOR

Now and then the

gassed b

Answer: What it took to win the competition — A STR

Tabbaa urges government to include private sector businessmen in official delegations

By Lamia Tabbaa
Special to the Jordan Times



Hamdi Tabbaa

AMMAN — Forty-two representatives of the country's private sector accompanied Jordan's official delegation to the Middle East North Africa (MENA) summit in Cairo which closed on Thursday.

"But while the inclusion of so many businessmen in an official delegation is welcome news to Jordan's private sector, we are afraid this is a one-time occurrence," says Hamdi Tabbaa, Chairman of the Jordanian Businessmen Association.

"What we would like to see is a permanent change in the system whereby most if not all government delegations include businessmen from now on," Mr. Tabbaa maintains.

"Today, the world is a big village and we are told by the World Bank and other such institutions that the private sector has to play a

greater role in stimulating the economy, but how do we translate these words into action?" asks Mr. Tabbaa, himself a former Minister of Trade and Industry.

To support his request, Mr. Tabbaa cites many examples of visiting delegations who come accompanied by substantial numbers of private sector businessmen.

"Only last week, the Turkish foreign minister, Mr. Tansu Ciller, who came to Jordan for one day, had brought with her about seventy businessmen."

One reason why the gov-

ernment, according to Mr. Tabbaa, should invite private sector businessmen to accompany them abroad is so that the businessmen of both countries can hold dialogue in the presence of officials.

In addition, "If the government is going to sign a protocol, we should be there, because at the end of the day we will have to implement it. As things stand now, the private sector is drawn in at a later stage and the protocols are imposed on us," he says, adding that it is easier for the businessmen to promote the country's investment potential in the company of an official delegation.

A third reason why the private sector should be represented in the government's trips abroad is because its technical expertise is indis-

pensable when officials sign protocols and trade agreements abroad.

"Some of these officials are not as knowledgeable on the technicalities of the economy and investment climate as we are (the private sector businessmen) are. They cannot argue because they do not have the technical background," he says.

Mr. Tabbaa cites last year's MENA summit in Amman as a clear example of full public-private sector cooperation. "But we only had one meeting of the follow-up committee headed by the Minister of Trade to follow up on the MENA results," he complains.

"We meet on an erratic basis. Sometimes they (the government) listen and at others they do not," he says referring to the sporadic meetings between the two sectors.

The JBA, in cooperation with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry is currently working on a draft for the formation of a council headed by the Prime Minister and comprising public and private sector represen-

Japan studying \$76m loan for Jordan's tourism sector

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Japanese government is considering a Jordanian request for a loan of about \$76 million to the Kingdom's tourism sector and a decision is expected next year, Japanese Ambassador Takayuki Kimura said Tuesday.

The loan, as and when approved, will be spent on tourism infrastructure as well as setting up new tourism sites and upgrading existing ones as part of Jordan's master plan to develop the tourism sector, the first to benefit from the Middle East peace process.

Projects in the plan include a national museum, "tourist alleys" in downtown Amman and in Karak, parking and recreation areas, information centres and upgrading facilities available at tourist sites.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Tokyo government's arm to implement projects financed under grant aid, has conducted a study on segments of the Kingdom's master plan.

The study, financed by the

Japanese government and formally presented during the Japan Week in Amman in July, is expected to lead into concrete projects subject to financing arrangements.

Ambassador Kimura said the Jordanian request for the loan was "under consideration in Tokyo, and we expect a final decision next year."

The ambassador noted that Tokyo had dispatched at least two missions to discuss the loan request with Jordanian officials.

Mr. Kimura said he was not aware that the Tokyo government had actually decided to grant the loan. He was commenting on a report in the local press that said such a decision had already been made.

"The Japanese embassy in Amman is not aware of any decision to grant the loan," he said.

Mr. Kimura, however, affirmed that the request was being considered favourably and that the loan would be coming through but that the official procedures have to be followed before a formal decision is made.

Jordan has also requested a \$60 million loan from Japan for its human resources development projects. The funds will be spent on building new schools. That request is also under consideration by the Tokyo government.

In per capita terms, Japan is Jordan's largest foreign donor. Tokyo's assistance to the Kingdom, in soft loans and rescheduling of outstanding debts as well as grant aid, topped \$500 million in fiscal 1995-96.

Tourism and the environment are two sectors that Japan is focusing on in the context of assistance to Jordan. Japan chairs the working group on the environment in the multilateral phase of the Middle East peace process. The Tokyo government has already supplied \$5.5 million worth of equipment to set up a marine pollution monitoring and fighting station at Aqaba. The station, which will work in close coordination with counterparts in Israel and Egypt, is expected to be operational before the end of the year.

Daily Business

A review of news from the Arabic press

New civil service regulations to be ready before end of 1996

THE NEW civil service regulations being prepared by the Ministry of Administrative Development will be ready before the end of this year, Minister Kamal Nasser said today. The minister added that a special committee has completed drawing an overall organizational structure of the government and, as such, the functions of the ministries, departments and institutions will be reactivated.

Dr. Nasser spoke about corruption and classified it into two categories:

- 1- Financial corruption which is a matter that should be dealt with legally as every civil servant found guilty should be punished according to the law.
 - 2- Administrative corruption which has resulted from the accumulation of bad practices.
- He stressed that fighting administrative corruption should be by limiting exceptions in appointments and by specifying in detail the bases for hiring staff. Furthermore, the minister pointed out, there should be a total ban on favouritism and "connections" in seeking employment. Dr. Nasser saw a real and applicable system of accountability as a needed measure at this stage (Al Ra'i).

Minister abolishes 'adviser' posts

ABDUL RAZZAQ TBEISHAT, the minister of municipalities and rural affairs, has abolished all the posts of "advisers" saying that there were too many of them at his ministry. He indicated that their advisers were never sought for anything of concern to the ministry. The minister added that despite having nothing to do "the advisers were hindering the work by moving from one office to another to pass the time." (Al Ra'i).

Seminar presents computer filing technique

By Christina Schlegel
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — While increasing numbers of PC-users belong to Jordan's Internet-Surfing community, many are still filing company and personal paperwork the old-fashioned way.

But now several local computer companies claim they can help out.

The "document and workflow management system" is currently being introduced by one of the country's leading computer companies.

The programme's presentation is taking place in a three-day-seminar and a special exhibition at the InterContinental Hotel, which began Sunday.

During the morning seminar, potential customers such as the banking sector, insurance companies, hotels and government departments were introduced to the new technology, which, according to Nabil Ashkar, the company's marketing and sales manager, saves time and money for its user.

Such filing systems, says Mr. Ashkar, are already widely in use in the U.S. and Europe. They are PC-based comprehensive archiving and document image management solutions and take care of the entire filing process within a person's field of work, he

says. The presented imaging programme, which is compatible to Windows 95, is said to integrate, access, distribute and control paper-based information throughout companies or individual desktops.

It provides its user with services like the collection and storage of image documents, fax-sending and additional images to your current desktop applications.

Cheque-clearing, for example can also be done totally automatically and thus saves paper and time, when searching for a certain file.

On the other hand it saves the client time as well, for the reason stated above.

"The programme," Mr. Ashkar said, "is very compatible and can be used by everyone. It is not limited to one sector."

Asked whether Jordanian companies already take advantage of such a programme, Mr. Ashkar said that there are not any so far.

"Jordan is trailing behind in the usage of the latest information technology compared to first world countries but not in terms of its knowledge," Mr. Ashkar explained.

The reason for that, he said, is the low purchasing power which affects the market quite heavily.

"There is a knowledgeable response to such products, but people simply cannot afford them," Mr. Ashkar added.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET										
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHEIKH SAUD										
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 19/11/1996										
PAST 12 MONTHS		COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF DF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE *
HIGH	LOW									
252.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	13.4	1.43	6	140	34300	245.00	245.00	-
4.700	4.250	CAIRO ARABIAN BANK	8.8	3.53	5	20000	85000	4.25	4.25	-
1.250	1.080	MICRO EAST INV. BK.	69.6	0.00	6	16000	16960	1.07	1.06	-.01
2.700	2.120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.0	6.33	3	875	1924	2.25	2.20	-.05
5.250	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	12.8	2.89	4	2250	10152	4.75	4.77	+.02
3.040	2.450	JOR. KIWAT BANK	18.1	0.00	2	250	543	2.50	2.50	-
1.200	1.080	JOR. GULF BANK	5.4	7.69	17	39130	34697	.91	.91	-
4.180	3.300	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.4	0.00	5	789	2860	3.62	3.63	+.01
\$ 3.930	1.400	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	9	0.00	1	700	1064	1.52	1.52	-
1.590	1.000	PHILADEL. INV. BK.	9	0.00	1	150	188	1.24	1.23	-.01
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 187.41	%CHG: -0.01	55	79354	18848			
1.900	1.450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	10.8	7.69	21	19000	29787	1.56	1.56	-
6.050	4.250	ARAB INTL. HOTELS	16.7	3.53	2	1110	4662	4.25	4.20	-.05
1.950	1.080	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	2	3250	3589	1.10	1.11	+.01
1.050	880	REAL ESTATE INV.	19.3	4.28	1	200	174	.89	.87	-.02
1.250	950	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	31.8	0.00	1	500	310	.59	.62	+.03
1.270	960	ZARQA EDUCATION	8.9	5.92	5	1600	1632	1.02	1.02	-
2.430	1.700	UNIFIED CO.	8	0.00	3	600	1014	1.70	1.69	-.01
1.200	820	UNION LAND DEV.	8	0.00	3	1850	1873	.86	.85	-.01
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 107.03	%CHG: -0.36	45	28110	42737			
3.770	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	18.5	3.10	2	62	200	3.23	3.23	-
5.960	4.780	ARAB POTASH CO.	17.2	3.53	2	1800	10206	5.75	5.67	-.08
10.550	8.720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.2	8.77	3	364	3219	9.10	9.12	+.02
2.750	1.650	INDUSTRIAL COMM. AGR.	26.5	0.00	1	150	298	1.95	1.97	+.02
8.150	6.420	JOR. ROYALTY HILLS	8.8	3.53	2	1500	10350	8.90	8.90	-
4.870	3.080	ARAB PHARM. MANF.	16.9	6.81	17	3660	11207	3.09	3.07	-.02
6.450	5.650	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	7.5	4.17	1	5000	30000	6.00	6.00	-
4.400	3.400	JOR. JEWELRY MANF.	8.9	7.45	5	840	1350	1.60	1.61	+.01
2.250	1.680	RAJIA INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	2	180	148	1.42	1.38	-.04
8.000	4.250	DAR ALDAMA DEV. INV.	11.8	4.65	1	500	2150	4.35	4.30	-.05
5.800	3.130	ARAB ALUM. IND.	8.0	9.32	4	309	995	3.30	3.22	-.08
960	820	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9	0.00	57	55960	30221	.53	.54	+.01
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 109.45	%CHG: -0.78	198	147210	219180			
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 146.34	%CHG: -0.32	298	284674	450373			
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR TUESDAY 19/11/1996										
.780	.440	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	23.3	0.00	8	3400	1899	.55	.58	+.03
.800	.520	JOR. TRADE FAC.	13.9	0.00	12	7800	3994	.52	.52	-
.950	.440	NATL. CORNER CENTERS	7	0.00	22	27865	13900	.48	.50	+.02
.930	.700	UNION INV. 505	67.0	0.00	14	20526	6104	.70	.70	-
1.110	.400	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	16.0	0.00	15	16750	7005	.41	.42	+.01
N .950	.690	AL-DARLIYAH 751	9	0.00	1	200	92	.69	.71	+.02
.540	.340	JOR. INDUS. MATCH-JEMCO	9	0.00	7	13550	5495	.35	.35	-
1.780	1.110	NATL. CHLORINE	9	0.00	2	950	1245	1.31	1.31	-
1.000	.520	NATL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	3	800	288	.43	.44	+.01
N 1.100	.400	NATL. MULT. ENG. HAMMO	9	0.00	14	8650	3806	.75	.75	-
.080	.750	JORDAN STEEL	9	0.00	2	500	1388	1.04	1.03	-.01
+ 1.330	1.040	UNION TOBACCO 752	9	0.00	1	1600	1200	.75	.75	-
.840	.580	RAZI PHARM. 651	25.3	0.00	1	3500	817	.58	.58	-
.850	.400	INDS. ENG.	25.3	0.00	1	500	205	.40	.41	+.01
N .950	.800	NATL. POULTRY	25.3	0.00	6	15740	9603	.61	.62	+.01
N 1.500	.530	MID-EAST COMPLEX	7.5	0.00	20	12450	8036	.65	.64	-.01
GRAND TOTAL					135	146931	64397			
+ : New 12 months low \$: Stock dividend during the past 12 months N : Listed during the past 12 months P : P/E ratio 100 or more - : Negative P/E E : Earning is zero or N/A for the most recent year										

THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



"We never get skunks in our yard. They hate Stanley's cologne."

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JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

HEWEL

DIMAT

RETAIS

PABURT

Answer here: A " " OF " " (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: BASIN SNORT FINITE HANGAR
Answer: What I look to win the muscle man competition - A STRONG FINISH

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Argentina's Gabriela Sabatini (R) gets flowers from Germany's Steffi Graf as the USA's Monica Seles (L) watches during Sabatini's retirement ceremonies at the WTA Championships at New York's Madison Square Garden. Sabatini announced her retirement last month after a 12-year career. (Reuters photo)

Sabatini waves goodbye one final time

NEW YORK (R) — Gabriela Sabatini waved goodbye one final time Monday when the tennis star was honoured between matches on the opening night of the season-ending WTA Championships.

Sabatini, 26, announced her retirement last month after a 12-year pro career in which she won 27 singles titles and more than \$8 million in prize money. The glamorous dark-haired Argentine, wearing a black sleeveless cocktail dress, was presented with a bouquet of roses from her long-time rivals Steffi Graf and Monica Seles and was remembered with a video tribute in the half-hour on-court ceremony at Madison Square Garden.

"This is a lot harder than being here and playing tennis," Sabatini said of missing the championships for the first time in her career.

Sabatini saluted the fans and the city where she had scored the biggest wins of her career at the 1990 U.S. Open and the 1994 and '88 season-ending championships.

"What a better place to do it than here at Madison Square Garden," Sabatini told the sparse crowd.

Sabatini is ranked 56 in the world, having fallen out of the world's top 10 for the first time since 1985 as she struggled with a stomach injury. She was sidelined for about three months, missing the French Open and Wimbledon before returning at the Olympics.

Sabatini played her last match at the European indoor championships in Zurich on October 15, losing to Jennifer Capriati 6-3 6-4 in the first round.

Sabatini plans to concentrate on a new perfume that will bear her

name and a line of signature bed and bathroom linens and towels. She also might pursue a singing career, after taking lessons in her layoff this year. She was given a karaoke machine to further her aspirations.

Hingis makes smashing debut at WTA Championships

NEW YORK (R) — Swiss teen sensation Martina Hingis made a smashing debut at the season-ending Chase Championships by walloping Irina Spirlea 6-1 6-2 Monday.

Since reaching the U.S. open semifinals two months ago, the 16-year-old Hingis has climbed from 16th to fifth in the world by winning two tournaments. She reached the final at another and the semifinals at a fourth.

Hingis, who handed Monica Seles a 6-2, 6-0 beating eight days ago in the Oakland final, was not pressed by her overmatched Romanian foe who made 25 unforced errors in the 41-minute match at Madison Square Garden.

"For my first time here, it was not a bad experience," Hingis said.

Hingis won the opening five games of the match, giving up seven points on the way. Spirlea never had a break point opportunity.

"I liked the way I played today. To win 6-1 6-2 there are not so many things to improve on anymore," said Hingis, whose seeding of seventh at this tournament is based on last week's rankings. "I didn't make any mistakes today."

Hingis' easy victory was matched by the 1994 runner-up Lindsay Davenport, but not by last year's finalist Anke Huber.

Davenport, this year's Olympics champion, battered Austrian Barbara Paulus 6-3 6-2. But Huber made a quick exit, losing to Iva Majoli 7-5 6-3 before a sparse crowd of 8,786.

Ailing defending champion Steffi Graf is scheduled to play her first match in the \$2 million tournament against Karina Habsudova of Slovakia Tuesday.

The top-seeded German was forced to quit in the middle of her match against Jana Novotna in the final of the Advanta Championships on Sunday in Philadelphia with a flare-up of chronic back pain.

"She hit for about 20 minutes today and continues to get better," tournament spokesperson Jim Fuhse said of the reigning French Wimbledon and U.S. Open champion. "Hopefully she will be totally ready for tomorrow's match."

Also scheduled is the second-seeded Seles against Japan's Kimiko Date, who is retiring after this tournament.

Davenport's win snapped the 20-year-old American out of a three-week funk during which she had failed to get past the quarter-finals in her last three tournaments.

"I probably played some of my not greatest tennis the last couple of weeks, and I was so nervous coming in here because you never



Lindsay Davenport

know how you're going to play after you've been playing pretty bad for awhile," said Davenport, a first round loser last week in Philadelphia. "I think that made me a little more concentrated and I wanted to win this match very badly."

Davenport dominated Paulus, the last qualifier for the elite 16-player field, by losing only 10 points in nine service games. Paulus never had a break point chance and managed to scratch out just two points on Davenport's serve in the final set of the 50-minute mismatch.

After losing in the first round the last two years, Majoli notched her first win at this tournament by out-

ting Huber from the baseline. The Croatian committed 15 fewer unforced errors in the one hour and 20 minute victory.

"I tried to concentrate hard and tried to win this first match and it wasn't easy. You get a little bit tight when you start thinking, 'Oh I can win it for the first time,'" said Majoli. 19, "But, I handled it pretty good and I won."

Huber got off to a struggling start, making four double faults in her first two service games, and never found the form that had carried the German to the Australian open final and three singles titles this year.

"I just didn't feel comfortable on the court the whole match," said Huber, 21. "It was just bad."

Majoli came out firing, taking a 5-2 first set lead, before Huber mounted a comeback, winning the next three games. Two games later, though, Huber dropped a forehand into the net on the second set point to close out the 44-minute set.

Majoli again took a commanding lead in the second set, taking a 3-0 lead with the loss of just six points. She went up 5-1 before Huber again rallied briefly by winning the next two games.

Majoli wrapped up the win on her first match point with a service winner.

Armstrong hopes to resume racing next year

PARIS (R) — Former world champion Lance Armstrong, currently fighting cancer, said he was hoping to resume competitive racing next year.

"I want to race. I want to win again and I feel in my heart that I still can," the 25-year-old American said in an interview released on Tuesday by the French sports daily L'Equipe.

"It will all depend on the evolution of my cancer but I still hope to be able to resume training at the end of the year," added the 1993 road race world champion, who revealed last month that he had Testicular and abdominal cancer.

"At the moment, I ride 90 minutes a day on average. I'm not fit, obviously. My muscles are weak after two months out of action but I'll try to be back in the pack by the end of next spring."

Before he was aware of his illness, Armstrong signed a contract with new French team Cofidis, who will start racing next year.

Sporting director Cyrille Guimard, who also signed Swiss Tony Rominger and Italian Maurizio Fondriest, said Cofidis would still welcome Armstrong if he were fit enough to join them.



Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre is sacked for a 16-yard loss in the second quarter by Dallas Cowboys Leon Lett (L) and Broderick Thomas (R) in Irving, Texas. Dallas won 21-6. (Reuters photo)

Cowboys beat Packers 21-6

DALLAS (R) — Chris Boniol tied an NFL record with seven field goals — five in the first half — and the defence held Brett Favre in check as the Dallas Cowboys defeated the Green Bay Packers 21-6 on Monday.

Boniol hit field goals of 45, 37, 42, 45 and 35 yards in the first half and 39 and 29 yards in the second half to join the St. Louis Cardinals Jim Bakken (1967) and Minnesota Viking's Rich Karlis (1989) as the only players to kick seven field goals in a game.

"I feel good," Boniol said. "It's something I'm proud of. I've been in bed 2-1/2 days with the flu and I didn't feel good in practice. But once the game started I felt okay."

Boniol's last field goal came with just 20 seconds left in regulation after Dallas quarterback Troy Aikman took a knee, leading the Packers to believe the Cowboys were going to run out the clock.

But the Cowboys kicked another field goal that angered the Packers, and a fight broke out.

The Packers' all-star defensive end, Reggie White, said, "the Cowboys

are classless. The game was (expletive) over."

Dallas held Green Bay without a touchdown until 1:53 remained in the game. Long after the outcome was no longer in doubt. It was the fifth of 11 games this season that the Cowboys defence has held an opponent under 10 points.

Favre was held to just 194 yards, completing 21-of-36, most while under pressure from a swarming Dallas defence.

"Basically we came out to contain Brett and stop the run," said Dallas linebacker Broderick Thomas. "We have a package when I come in, and I went for the quarterback all day."

One bright spot for Green Bay was the play of tight end Keith Jackson, who had seven catches for 98 yards as Favre's primary target.

Aikman continued his strong play against the Packers, completing 24-of-35 passes for 206 yards. Emmitt Smith added 20 carries for 76 yards, and Michael Irvin had five receptions, including a pair of key catches in the first half, for 66 yards.

After stopping the Packers three-

and-out on the first series of the game, the Cowboys took over and needed just six plays to score. Aikman hit a 31-yard bomb to Irvin that put the ball on the Green Bay 31, and three plays later Boniol converted a 45-yard opportunity.

Another three-and-out by the Packers offence gave the Cowboys good position and they capitalised on it. Moving 35 yards in nine plays, Dallas seized a 9-0 advantage when Boniol hit a 42-yarder.

Again the Packers mustered nothing offensively, and Dallas took over near midfield. Aikman found Kevin Williams, who was returning from a broken foot, for 10 yards and Michael Irvin for nine. But the possession stalled and Boniol's fourth field goal was from 45 yards out.

Favre dropped back to pass three times on Green Bay's next drive and again failed to produce a first down. Dallas took over on its 20 and utilized the two-minute offence to drive to the Packers 17. Boniol hit a 35-yarder with seven seconds left in the half for a 15-0 advantage.

Venables to coach Australia's soccerroos

MELBOURNE (R) — former World Cup coach Terry Venables is set to take over as manager of the Australian national soccer team.

Australian soccer sources on Tuesday announced the move to West London drink-

later in the day in a news conference with Australia chairman

Hill. "We wouldn't be holding a new conference to say 'no,'" one

old Reuters. "It's a very positive period in the last few days."

whose coaches, who included

and Tottenham, who quit the England

after taking his place in the semifinals of

the job because he had a number of

before him — a long-running

with Tottenham, Alan Sugar — a

could interfere with Ven-

was talking to Australia officials about

long-time coach Thomson, who will

in January, some observers

Australia's lowly status as a soccer nation.

Venables has told newspapers that he

by the soccer likely participation

Kings

COVINGTON (R) — Billy Owens, who had 10 rebounds and 10 points, which won for the first time since 1991, as Lee Mayberry, three-point shooter, gave the Kings a 12-second remaining. Greg

and rolled off the rim.

Wednesday's

foreign

brigade

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FIELD (AFP) —

Wednesday's

had the

team roaring on Mon-

then first Dutch

in Italian midfielder

Carbone scored the

to give their side a 2-

over Nottingham

was also just

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Mark Pen-

should have given

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the home side had

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the second-half to

the net — Crossley

as Trustfull swept

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the Dutchman's first

on Wednesday since he

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Keenwood earlier this

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CONCORD

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INDEPENDENCE DAY
(In Dolby stereo)
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Venables set to coach Australia's soccerroos

SYDNEY (R) — former England soccer boss Terry Venables, eager to try his luck in the World Cup, has agreed to take over as manager of the Australian national team.

Australian soccer sources said on Tuesday Venables would announce the move at his West London drinking club later in the day in a joint news conference with soccer Australia chairman David Hill.

"Logic says we wouldn't be holding a news conference just to say no," one source told Reuters. "It's been a very positive period during the last few days."

Venables, whose coaching career has included spells at the helm of Barcelona and Tottenham Hotspur, quit the England job in June after taking his country to the semifinals of the Euro '96 on home turf.

He left the job because he said he had a number of legal battles before him — including a long-running dispute with Tottenham chairman Alan Sugar — which could interfere with it.

News last week that Venables was talking to Australian officials about replacing long-time coach Eddie Thomson, who will join Hiroshima in Japan's J-League in January, surprised some observers given Australia's lowly status as a soccer nation.

But Venables has told English newspapers that he was attracted by the soccerroos' likely participation



Former England coach Terry Venables speaks to reporters in London following his confirmation as Australia's new soccer coach (Reuters photo)

in the 1998 World Cup finals in France.

"The job offers me one thing I have always wanted — to be involved in a world cup. I wanted it with England, but it wasn't to be. In the circumstances the offer from Australia is exciting," Venables said.

Australia have only once qualified for the world cup finals — in 1974 — but are an improving team and face a relatively easy path to France. The winners of the weak Oceania Group will meet an Asian team in a final qualifying play-off.

News reports about negotiations between Venables and Hill angered some figures on the local soccer scene, who have complained that the job should go to someone who knows more about Australian soccer and the players on offer.

Former Australia goalkeeper Jack Reilly said on Monday the situation was a disgrace and a "slap in the face" for all those involved in the Australian game.

Others have criticised rumours plans to appoint parallel coaches — one in Europe to handle Australia's 100-plus overseas players and one to nurture home-based talent. Australia media reports have put Venables likely salary at more than \$400,000 (\$320,000), around double what Thomson was thought to earn.

Soccer Australia declined to give any details about Venables' future salary or other aspects, but sources said he was expected to spend at least six months a year in Australia.

UEFA Champions' League United, Juventus top European bill; Auxerre take on undermanned Ajax

PARIS (AFP) — Manchester United host Juventus in the pick of the latest round of Champions League matches Wednesday night — a match United must win to keep alive their chances of qualifying for the quarter-finals.

United, beaten at home in European competition for the first time in 40 years by Fenerbahce a fortnight ago, are in second place — four points behind Juventus but only two points clear of Fenerbahce who are at home to Rapid Vienna.

The English double winners, who ended their run of three English Premiership defeats with a 1-0 win over Arsenal on Saturday, will welcome back combative Irish midfielder Roy Keane and compatriot Denis Irwin into defence.

However, it is the return from injury of Welsh wing Ryan Giggs that has United manager Alex Ferguson really purring.

"When Ryan turns it on he lifts the team and there is no question that we have missed that natural left foot of his, and the electricity he can bring," Ferguson said.

Juventus, who beat United 1-0 in September, are likely to drop playmaker Alessandro Del Piero in favour of a 4-4-2 formation — something that the player appeared to be fairly relaxed about.

"I hope this time I'll get to play at old Trafford, but if I was to choose between the Champions League and the Intercontinental Cup in Tokyo I would rather play in the latter," Del Piero said. Referring to the showdown with Argentinian side River Plate in Tokyo next Tuesday.

Definitely out will be captain Antonio Conte, who will miss the rest of the season following an operation to his cruciate ligaments.

Fenerbahce hardly had the ideal preparation for

their match with Rapid Vienna, drawing 1-1 with Mediocre Trabzonspor and then being assaulted by their own supporters on the pitch.

Midfielder Tayfun is out injured but in a match that Vefah Kucuk, their vice president, said was a must win game, they will rely on Nigerian playmaker Jay Okocha and striker Elvir Bolic, scorer of their two goals in the competition, to force the victory they require to maintain an interest in the league.

AC Milan travel to Porto in Group D on the back of an encouraging scoreless draw with Juventus on Sunday, and aiming to avenge their shock 3-2 home defeat to the Portuguese champions in September.

Milan Trail Porto by six points and have only a three point lead over Rosenberg and Gothenburg, who play each other in Norway.

The Italian champions welcome back veteran 36-year-old central defender Franco Baresi, whose performance on Sunday against Juventus had coach Oscar Washington Tabarez in raptures.

"Everything changed with him in the side. He knows how to organise a defence and how to read a game. He is an ageless champion," Tabarez said.

Tabarez mind might well be on the Champions League but it is clear that is not the case for vice-president Adriano Galliani. "The Champions League game is not the match for our lives."

Its important but not decisive. We have to limit ourselves and give everything next weekend in the Milan Derby," Galliani, who can afford to be relaxed about results whereas Tabarez most certainly cannot, said.

AC Milan will be boosted by Baresi but will lack a hard edge in midfield as

Demetrio Albertini is suspended.

Porto will be missing midfielder Paulinho Santos, who is suspended, and will be replaced by either Barroso or the youngster Bino.

Otherwise they will be able to call on their regular strikeforce of Jardi and Artur, joint top scorers in the Champions League with three apiece.

Rosenberg haven't won since their opening 3-2 win away at Gothenburg, and only scored once since, but will be able to call on a full squad apart from striker Jahn 'Mini' Jakobsen, one of the scorers against Gothenburg, who is suspended and defender Carl Lokken who has a shoulder injury.

Swedish international wing Jesper Blomqvist will play his last European match for Gothenburg. AC Milan paid \$3 million for him last Thursday and he is due to join the Italians in December.

In Group A, French champions Auxerre travel to Ajax, the 1995 European Cup winners, after slumping to a 1-0 league defeat against Rennes and with a long injury list banging over them.

The good news for the Frenchmen is that Ajax have similar problems. They were beaten 2-0 at the weekend by Breda and also have several players out injured or suspended.

Auxerre are still missing their strike partnership of Lillian Laslandes, although he came through a reserve match on Sunday and may be on the bench, and Thomas Deniaud, scorer of three goals in the Champions League this season.

Australian sweeper Ned Zelic is back in training but unlikely to be rushed into the game and Freoch international midfielder Sabri Lamouchi is still out with an ankle injury he

picked up in the friendly with Turkey last month.

Auxerre will rely on the defensive qualities of Nigerian Taribo West, the midfield guide of Algerian Moussa Saib and wing play of

Ajax will be without internationals Danny Blind, Jari Litmanen, Richard Witschge and Peter Hoekstra, all injured, and Brazilian defender Marcio Santos will also have to sit out. Santos, like Witschge, is suspended.

The Dutchmen will rely on the speedy wing Tijani Babangida and the goals of Portuguese striker Dani to nullify the French threat.

The only other hope for Auxerre will be if Scotland's Rangers beat visiting surprise package of their group — Grasshoppers Zurich.

The Swiss champions lead the group on goal difference with Ajax and are three points ahead of Auxerre.

Rangers, without a point and with only two goals scored against 10 conceded, need to take their chances and their hopes must be reinforced with news that their opponents will be without Romanian striker Viorel Moldovan and attacking midfielder Murat Yakin.

Both players have scored two goals in the Champions League so far. Yakin scoring the winner against Ajax in Amsterdam while Moldovan notched two against Auxerre a fortnight

ago. Zurich will be relying more heavily than ever on Swiss international striker Kubilay Turkulmaz.

Rangers too will not be at full strength since England forward Paul Gascoigne is suspended. But they will welcome back Richard Gough, Craig Moore and Alex Cleland, all suspended for their last match.

Group B is effectively settled. Both Atletico Madrid and Borussia Dortmund are six points clear of Widzew Lodz and Steaua Bucharest.

Atletico who travel to Romania have injury doubts surrounding Yugoslav midfielder Milanko Panuk, who has hurt his left ankle, striker Kiko, troubled by his right knee, and midfielder Juan Vizcaino who has a muscular injury.

Dumitru Dumitriu, the Steaua coach, was brutally honest about his side's chances despite the experience of striker Mario Lacatus.

"This is a battle between an experienced stylish Spanish side and a side that has lost a lot of its experienced players to clubs abroad," Dumitru said.

Dortmund travel to Poland, reinforced by the return of German 'player of the year' Matthias Sammer.

Widzew Lodz, who lead their league after their 2-0 win over Legia Warsaw on Sunday, are just hoping for the best against the German giants who beat them 2-1 in their opening match.

Kings nip Grizzlies

VANCOUVER (R) — Billy Owens scored 17 points, including a jumper with 61 seconds to lift the Sacramento Kings past the Vancouver Grizzlies, 84-83 Monday. Owens had 10 rebounds and Olden Polynice finished with 15 points and 11 boards for Sacramento, which won for the first time in three games at Vancouver. Bryant Reeves had 19 points for the Grizzlies, who took a four-point lead after three quarters on a Lee Mayberry three-pointer at the buzzer. After Owens basket gave the Kings the lead, Vancouver blew a chance to win the game with 3.2 seconds remaining. Greg Anthony's jump shot from the top of the key went off the glass and rolled off the rim.

Wednesday's foreign brigade produce the goods

SHEFFIELD (AFP) — Sheffield Wednesday's 'foreign brigade' had the home fans roaring on Monday when first Dutch import Orlando Trustfull and then Italian midfielder Benito Carbone scored the goals to give their side a 2-0 victory over Nottingham Forest.

The win, Wednesday's first in eleven league and cup outings, kept the visitors, without a win since the first match of the season, firmly rooted at the foot of the English Premiership.

Blinker was also just inches off target with a snap shot and Welsh international Mark Pembridge should have given Wednesday the lead on nine minutes but he shot straight at the Nottingham goalkeeper Mark Crossley. In fact the home side had to wait until midway through the second-half to find the net — Crossley stranded as Trustfull swept home a low shot from inside the box after Newson had headed on Carbone's corner.

It was the Dutchman's first goal for Wednesday since he made the 750,000 switch from Feyenoord earlier this season.

Trustfull limped off with what looked like a hamstring injury after 80 minutes, but Wednesday kept pressing forward and they put the issue beyond doubt five minutes from time when Carbone, the club's three million pound signing from Inter Milan, slammed home a 20-yard drive.

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U.N., AOHR slam Israel for sanctioning torture

GENEVA (Agencies) — The United Nations condemned Tuesday a decision by Israel's supreme court to authorise the use of physical violence against a Palestinian prisoner, saying that no crime could justify torture.

The U.N. Committee Against Torture said in a statement here that recourse to violence to question suspects was unacceptable, and criticised the supreme court's decision to give the Shin Bet intelligence service the green light to use "physical pressure" to interrogate a Palestinian prisoner.

The court, explaining its decision, said it had been convinced by the Shin Bet that its prisoner, Mohammad Adel Aziz Hamdan, held crucial information which could avoid attacks.

Hamdan, from the West Bank town of Ramallah, is said to be a member of the Islamic Jihad, which has claimed several deadly bomb attacks in Israel, judicial sources said.

"Heightened physical pressure," such as violent shaking, has been repeatedly denounced as torture by human rights groups in Israel. It was blamed for the death of a Palestinian prisoner in April 1995.

In Cairo, the Arab Organisation for Human Rights (AOHR) said on Tuesday Israel has institutionalised racism by allowing its secret service interrogators to torture Palestinian prisoners and not Jews.

The supreme court decision shows "the extent of violations repeatedly committed against human rights in the Palestinian occupied territories," the group said in a statement.

"The decision previously taken by the same court... of prohibiting the exercise of physical torture against any Jew involves sanctioning the Israeli authorities to exercise striking racial discrimination between Israelis and Palestinians with the consent of the Israeli supreme court," it added.

The decision is a "flagrant violation of international conventions on the humanitarian law and human rights," the group said.

It appealed to all organisations to notify the United Nations and issue a resolution condemning Israel and demanding an end to such violations.

Israeli officials said meanwhile two Israeli border guards were arrested Tuesday after they were filmed beating and humiliat-

ing Palestinian workers caught trying to infiltrate into Jerusalem.

A justice ministry spokesman said the two had been suspended and remanded in custody for an initial 48 hours for interrogation.

The pair were filmed by an amateur Palestinian cameraman punching, slapping and kicking Palestinian workers near the Al Ram checkpoint north of Jerusalem.

During the incident, which took place five weeks earlier, the Palestinians were also forced to do push-ups and one of the policemen was shown pretending to urinate on one of the men.

The video was broadcast Monday night on Israeli television and Internal Security Minister Avidgor Kahalani immediately ordered that the two border guards be suspended and legal action taken against them.

The head of the border guards, Commissioner Israel Sadan, told Israel Radio Tuesday that the two policemen would be dismissed "because we can't afford to have such rotten fruit among us."

Tehran moves to ease row with Germany

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian leaders and the official media on Tuesday moved to ease tension with Germany over accusations of terrorism against Tehran as Islamic hardliners threatened to take over the German embassy.

State-run radio and television have been airing around the clock conciliatory statements from German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel in a telephone call with his Iranian counterpart Ali Akbar Velayati late Sunday.

The newspapers have also been running the story on their front pages, quoting Mr. Kinkel as saying that Bonn does not wish to see relations deteriorate with Tehran.

"Kinkel's contact with Velayati could be a good starting point for ending the crisis," said Jomhuri Islamic newspaper, which had earlier chastised Bonn for "insulting" Iranian leaders.

"This is a logical step to appease the flames of the wrath of the Iranian people," it added.

German prosecutors have accused Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani of approving the murder of four Kurdish opposition leaders in a Berlin restaurant in 1992.

"Like Mr. Kinkel, we believe that everything should be done to avert further tension," the English-language daily Tehran Times said. "Both sides should seek to revive the cordial state of relations between them as soon as possible."

Iran's Chief Justice Ayatollah Mohammad Yazdi, who last week threatened retaliatory measures against Bonn, said Monday that Tehran attributed the "disrespect to a mistake and immature behaviour" from the German prosecutor.

He urged Bonn, which is Tehran's top trade partner, to distance itself from the charges of the prosecutor.

An influential conservative political figure, Habibollah Asgari, also hailed the telephone conversation between Mr. Kinkel and Mr. Velayati as a "sign that Bonn was alarmed" at the prospect of jeopardising ties with Iran.

The Iranian government is reluctant to endanger ties with Germany, which has strongly opposed U.S. efforts to isolate Tehran.

Relations have already survived several other crises in past years. But Islamic hardliners continued Tuesday to whip up anger against Bonn.

Several hundred hardliners demonstrated outside the German embassy on Tuesday, threatening to take over the mission if Bonn does not retract its terrorism charges against Iranian leaders.

"If the Germans do not apologise in writing, we will turn the mission into a second spy nest," warned a spokesman for the group, known as Hizbollah, in a speech in front of the compound.

He was referring to the former U.S. embassy in Tehran that was seized by radical students in the aftermath of the 1979 revolution on charges that it was an "espionage nest."

The protesters, carrying placards condemning the "fascist" Bonn government, vowed to target German interests if Ayatollah Khamenei issued a jihad, or holy war, against Bonn as Iran's political and spiritual guide.

"If you stand against our religion, we will stand against your worldly interests," the spokesman said, calling for the expulsion of the German ambassador.



ROYAL GREETING: Her Majesty Queen Noor greets His Majesty King Hussein after the King on Tuesday opened the regular session of the 12th Parliament in a traditional ceremony (photo by Yusef Allan)

Prisoner release under amnesty is expected to begin next week

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Authorities are expected to start releasing prisoners early next week under a Royal amnesty offered by His Majesty King Hussein, official sources said Tuesday.

Justice Minister Abdul Karim Dughmi was meanwhile quoted as saying that all those arrested in connection with the unrest and riots in the south in mid-August were released.

The official sources said a ministerial committee and a technical panel set up by the government early this week had almost completed their work, and their final recommendations were to be submitted to the King for approval.

Cases of up to 1,600 people would be studied under the amnesty, which does not cover prisoners convicted of threatening national security, spying, rape and murder.

Mr. Dughmi was quoted by the local press as saying that no one arrested in connection with the unrest in the south over the rechanneling of subsidies for bread and fodder remained in prison.

One of the key targets of the Royal amnesty was those detained and possibly facing trial for their alleged role in the riots in Karak and other southern towns.

As to others, Mr. Dughmi was quoted as saying, one of the preconditions for eligibility for the amnesty was the dropping of all personal claims by those whose complaints might have led to the conviction of the prisoner concerned.

Most prisoners convicted of petty crimes and have served half of their sentences are eligible to be released under the amnesty, which does not cover violators of traffic regulations, or cases involving illegal housemaids. Those under trial are also excluded.

The ministerial committee will group the minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, the minister of state for Prime Ministry affairs and the minister of administrative development. The technical committee will include the secretary general of the Interior Ministry, the Amman prosecutor general, the 'Amman governor and representatives of the Public Security Department, the military security department and the General Intelligence Department.

The human rights group Amnesty International meanwhile welcomed the release of Leith Shbeilat, president of the Jordan Engineers Association who was freed last week under a special amnesty from the

King. The London-based Amnesty said in a statement that it considered Mr. Shbeilat a "prisoner of conscience" and asserted that he was "detained solely because of his opposition to (Jordan's) peace agreement with Israel and his other peaceful political activities."

Mr. Shbeilat, a strong critic of the government, was convicted on lese majeste and sentenced to three years in prison in March this year.

On Nov. 8, the King personally went to Swaga prison to inform him of the special pardon and drove him home to his mother.

"Amnesty International welcomes the release of Leith Shbeilat," the human rights organisation said. It called on the government to include in the general amnesty "all other prisoners held solely for the non-violent expression of their conscientiously-held beliefs."

The government denies detaining anyone for their political beliefs or ideology and emphasises that only violators of the Kingdom's laws, whether criminal or security-related, are detained or convicted. It also points out that Jordan does not have any laws that call for the detention of people on political grounds.

Parliament

(Continued from page 1) Boycotted the House's meetings before the extraordinary summer session was terminated on the day bread prices were raised, are expected to renew their criticism of the government once the House starts its regular meetings.

Observers expect the deliberations of the House to be especially heated in the current session because it will be followed by new parliamentary elections and

will be used as an election-eering opportunity. But observers say the IAF-led 23 opposition lawmakers will not be able to extract major concessions from the government that enjoys the support of the majority of deputies.

The impending decision to lower bread prices is also expected to win the government some of its supporters who did not agree on rechanneling bread and fodder subsidies.

A new election law that the government is expected to present to the House dur-

ing this session is likely to generate the most heated debate due to the government's insistence on not heading the opposition's demand for cancelling the one-person, one-vote formula.

The four-month session will have to address a number of economic laws which the government deems necessary for economic growth and recovery. The majority support that the government enjoys in the House is expected to lead for a speedy endorsement of these legislation.

Armed Forces

(Continued from page 1) Jordan's quest to obtain arms. King Hussein expressed appreciation to President Clinton and his administration for their gesture towards Jordan.

Field Marshal Mirai sent King Hussein a cable expressing the armed forces' appreciation of his endeavours to secure strong defence for Jordan through the modernisation of the country's armed forces.

"Through your efforts you have made of Jordan a model of democracy for the

other countries of the region and maintained strong bridges with the various nations," said Field Marshal Mirai in his cable.

"You have attained what you have aspired for our country of links with the NATO alliance and this crowns your efforts and the U.S. decision came to express appreciation for your courage and in recognition of the Kingdom as a country playing a main role in the region," the message said.

headquarters overnight was tantamount to a unilateral political decision to carry out the redeployment even before negotiators had reached an agreement.

"The army has already evacuated its headquarters in Hebron without even receiving an order from the political leaders," said Naom Arnon, a leader of Hebron's settlers.

Interior Minister Elie Suissa of the ultra-Orthodox Shas Party backed the withdrawal and lashed out at the settlers for putting the lives of Israeli troops in danger.

"The whole Jewish settlement in Hebron is not worth one drop of blood of a soldier," Mr. Suissa said in an interview published in the daily Haaretz.

"I have great doubts about the logic behind this settlement and concerning its utility versus the damage it causes," he said.

"I would not go to live in Hebron and I think serious study must be given to the question of whether religious law allows one to live there," said Mr. Suissa, referring to traditional Jewish law which prohibits actions which put one's own life or the lives of others in danger.

Saddam calls on Kurds to stop cooperating with foreign powers

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraqi President Saddam Hussein has urged the Kurds in northern Iraq to stop working with foreign powers and reconcile with his government.

"We are paying tribute to our Kurdish people in the autonomous area and we hope to see the hired and corrupt (Kurdish) accomplices rejoin the nation's ranks after repenting," President Saddam was quoted as saying in the official press Tuesday.

The Kurdish north, which became effectively autonomous under allied air cover in 1991, should be a fortress which "prevents any foreigner or aggressor from gaining a foothold on Iraqi soil."

President Saddam told officers during a speech late Monday. "What will one say of those who made war against Iraq on behalf of the United States or Iran or any other country?" President Saddam asked the officers who gave military help to the Iraqi Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) in August.

The KDP formed a tactical

alliance with Iraqi forces to capture the main Kurdish city of Erbil from its rival Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) on Aug. 31, which led to two months of fighting.

But both have agreed to a U.S.-brokered ceasefire which took hold at the end of October.

The KDP accused the PUK of receiving Iranian support, which the PUK and Iran both deny.

Meanwhile, a Baath Party official in Baghdad, Abdul Ghani Abdul Ghafour, urged the Kurdish factions to "resume a dialogue with the central government to definitively stop the strange situation in northern Iraq."

"The dialogue in Baghdad, capital of all Iraqis gathered under one tent, reflects the hopes of our Kurdish people" to reconcile, Mr. Abdul Ghafour told the official press.

The daily Al Iraq urged the KDP and PUK to accept President Saddam's offer of reconciliation and reject any foreign interference.

"The time has come to take courageous and his-

toric decisions, say 'no' to the interference of foreign powers and end the unstable situation" in northern Iraq, the newspaper said.

Meanwhile, a KDP official is in Iran to discuss improving ties after months of tension over charges of Iranian support for the PUK, the official Iranian news agency IRNA said.

Fazel Mirani, a member of the KDP's political office, held talks on Monday with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Hossein Sheikholeslam and called for a "new chapter in relations" with Iran, it said.

The KDP official told IRNA later that "signs of improved relations will appear shortly."

"We have come here to remove small obstacles which have recently emerged and have discussed the issue openly and explicitly with Iranian officials," he was quoted as saying.

"There was a good understanding from both sides and problems have been generally eliminated," Mr. Mirani added.

Palestinian woman sentenced to 12 years in jail for 1977 hijack

HAMBURG (Agencies) — Palestinian Souhaila Andrawes was sentenced to 12 years imprisonment by a Hamburg court Tuesday for her part in the deadly hijacking of a German airliner with 87 people aboard to Somalia in 1977.

Ms. Andrawes, alias Soraya Ansari, aged 43, who was the sole surviving member of the four-member Palestinian commando squad which hijacked the plane, was convicted of murder, attempted murder, hostage-taking, extortion and interfering with air traffic.

The hijackers, who seized the Lufthansa plane to try to force the release of jailed members of the Red Army Faction and Palestinian militants, shot the aircraft's captain dead.

Ms. Andrawes insisted at the start of her trial that she had no part in the killing of the captain during a stop in south Yemen.

But the Hamburg state supreme court ruled that she was an accomplice in the killing.

During the trial, a former crew member testified that at one point she threatened



Souhaila Andrawes

to pour gasoline onto the co-pilot and set him on fire.

The woman was the only one of four Palestinian hijackers to survive when German commandos stormed the Lufthansa plane on Oct. 18, 1977 in Mogadishu, Somalia, and freed the 87 hostages.

She was arrested in 1994 in Oslo, Norway, after 17 years on the run and extradited to Germany.

The hijackers, from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, commandeered the

Lufthansa airliner after it took off from Mallorca, Spain.

They were trying to force the release of imprisoned group members and left-wing guerrillas from Germany's Red Army Faction.

The group's leader shot and killed airline pilot Juergen Schumann, law authorities say. The hijackers also threatened to kill the 83 passengers and remaining four crew members.

At that point, Germany broke off negotiations with the hijackers.

German commandos stormed the plane after it landed at Mogadishu and killed the three male hijackers. Two German sharpshooters were wounded, as was Ms. Andrawes.

Afterward, she served a short prison term in Somalia, then disappeared until her arrest in Oslo, where she had lived for about three years under a new identity with her husband and young daughter.

The court said Ms. Andrawes' previous prison time would be deducted from her sentence.

Final full moon for Father Christmas

NEW DELHI (AFP) — Christmas this year will be celebrated for the fifth and last time this century on a full moon night, the Press Trust of India said Tuesday. Christmas had coincided with the full moon in 1901, 1920, 1931 and 1970. The next Christmas full moon will be in 2015. Piyush Pandey, assistant director of Calcutta's Birla Planetarium told the news agency. Mr. Pandey said Christmas has coincided with the full moon 71 times since the beginning of the Christian era to the year 2000.

Women caught smuggling heroin embedded in threads on dresses

JEDDAH (AP) — A group of Pakistani women were caught trying to smuggle heroin embedded in the gold thread on their embroidered clothes, the Al Medina newspaper reported Tuesday. About seven kilograms of heroin was extracted from the thread on the dresses the women were wearing, the Arabic-language daily said.

The five-year-old daughter of one of the women also was taken into custody, it said. The paper said it was the largest number of women arrested for drug smuggling, but did not say how many were involved or when they were detained.

The thread apparently was soaked with heroin and then gilded with a gold-covered substance. The paper said customs officials at Jeddah airport became suspicious over the embroidery on the clothes worn by Kulsom, 27, and her daughter Shebnaz, who is five.

It said samples of the thread were tested and found to contain heroin. Kulsom's dress had more than 1.5 kilograms of heroin on it, and her daughter's about 600 grammes, the paper reported. Other female relatives were searched and found to be wearing heroin-laced clothes as well, the paper said.

The government denies detaining anyone for their political beliefs or ideology and emphasises that only violators of the Kingdom's laws, whether criminal or security-related, are detained or convicted. It also points out that Jordan does not have any laws that call for the detention of people on political grounds.

Picasso exhibited in China

BEIJING (AFP) — A wealthy German art collector has left four works by Spanish painter Pablo Picasso to China so his paintings can be exhibited in China for the first time, the China Daily said Tuesday. Peter Ludwig, who died in July, left China 117 paintings in all, including the late Picasso works Ludwig's widow Irene handed over formal documents on Monday at a ceremony presided by Li Tiejing, a member of the Communist Party Politburo. He said the donation was of "great importance for the two countries" and would lead to greater understanding between them, the Daily said. Beijing's National Arts Museum will exhibit the paintings in a special gallery named after Ludwig. The donation coincides with a visit to China by German President Roman Herzog.

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"I have great doubts about the logic behind this settlement and concerning its utility versus the damage it causes," he said.

"I would not go to live in Hebron and I think serious study must be given to the question of whether religious law allows one to live there," said Mr. Suissa, referring to traditional Jewish law which prohibits actions which put one's own life or the lives of others in danger.

The whole Jewish settle-

ments find platinum,

Experts have spent some time in several locations in Egypt and located a deposit of gold. The news was reported Wednesday. The news of the state-run Egyptian Press Syndicate said "strikingly" the production of precious metals and minerals in Egypt had located 15 new sites for gold in the Sinai and southern Egypt that had been previously unexplored. The syndicate said that companies have applied for gold in these locations and the firms involved or

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GHQ

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